



Inspection Report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 119487
LEA
Inspection number 280570
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Mark Williams

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Briercliffe Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Burnley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		BB10 2NH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 426833
Number on roll	270	Fax number	01282 839181
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Susan Hardwick
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Miss Jennifer Brunskill

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a Church of England voluntary aided primary serving the parish of Briercliffe and surrounding districts. There are 270 pupils of whom 3.7% are entitled to free school meals. This is below the national average. Some 17% of pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities which is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils enter school in the Foundation Stage with attainment that is broadly in line with children of the same age nationally, but this varies from year to year. The school has experienced some staffing difficulties and has been without a deputy headteacher for the past four terms.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school, through its own self evaluation, has a more positive view of itself than the inspectors. However, the school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses.

The school provides a generally sound education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Its main strengths include its strong Christian ethos, the way it seeks to promote personal development and well-being and the good quality provision in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Pupils at the school, including those with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities are happy. They have positive attitudes and are growing into responsible members of the community. The school is held in high regard by the parents and the parish. However, the school has not always ensured consistency in the quality of teaching, its planning of the taught curriculum and the way it makes use of assessments of pupils' progress. This has meant higher ability pupils have not always made the progress of which they are capable.

The issues identified in the previous inspection have been dealt with; particularly successful work has been completed with writing in Key Stage 1 and provision in the Foundation Stage. However, the school and inspectors acknowledge more work is still to be undertaken if standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are to reflect the true ability of the pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, although the role of subject leaders is underdeveloped and good practice is not always shared. The headteacher and governors provide strong leadership in promoting the ethos of the school. Inspectors judge the school to have the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide opportunities for higher ability pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure consistent assessment procedures are in place across the school.
- Ensure the taught curriculum provides all pupils with the same opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning.
- Develop the role of subject leaders across the school.
- Ensure that good practice is effectively disseminated throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pupils enter the reception year with a wide range of abilities broadly in line with national expectations. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 they make good progress and standards achieved are good. There have been improvements in writing, with 94% of seven year olds reaching at least the expected level of attainment in the 2005 national tests. Similar good results have been achieved in reading and mathematics.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. However, they make less progress in science where attainment in 2005 was significantly lower than the national average, as it was in 2003. One of the main issues the school has identified is the performance of higher ability pupils; not enough pupils achieve the higher Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. While standards achieved by pupils when they leave school at eleven are satisfactory, given the good start they make up to the age of seven, pupils at Key Stage 2 do not make as much progress as they should. This is because teachers make insufficient and inconsistent use of information which indicates what pupils can already do.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities are identified early and suitable work provided. They, too, make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils enjoy school and like lessons. Their attendance, punctuality and behaviour around school are also good. The school is effective in providing opportunities for pupils to help each other and develop good relationships. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example distributing fruit for snacks.

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and consequently show respect for beliefs different from their own. They have concern for others and regularly raise funds for charity. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is enhanced by the school's strong Christian ethos.

As a result of the school's initiatives such as providing healthy snacks and opportunities to participate in sport both in and outside of school, pupils are well aware of the benefits of healthy eating and taking regular exercise. The school is effective in enabling pupils to develop a sense of citizenship. For example, some pupils have observed the local council in action. The school council manages its own budget and have been instrumental in making improvements to the outdoor play area.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; however inspectors found the quality varied across the school. Good practice is not always effectively shared.

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good, with some very good aspects. The staff work together very well and have very effective systems in place to observe and assess children. They use this information very well to target their teaching to particular groups and plan a stimulating range of learning activities to motivate them. For example, the 'school office' provides a stimulating environment to develop communication skills.

In the rest of the school teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching observed. In good lessons, work is well matched to the needs of the pupils of all abilities and teachers skilfully ask questions that probe pupils' thinking and understanding. However, teachers' planning does not always take into account the different needs of the higher attaining pupils. Effective training for all staff in improving the teaching of writing has led to higher standards throughout the school.

Work for pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is well matched to their prior attainment. Good support is given by teaching assistants who are dedicated and enthusiastic, but sometimes their expertise is not used as effectively as it could be during whole class times. Teachers manage behaviour well and emphasise the behaviour that they want to promote. There are strong links with the parents and carers to support learning.

Assessment from Year 1 to Year 6 is inconsistently used. Teachers do not always identify the standards that the pupils have reached, resulting in a lack of consistency in recording pupils' ongoing achievement. This deficiency in ongoing assessment is having an impact on the teachers' ability to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Some of the marking and feedback is good, but in other instances it is not linked clearly to the needs of the pupils. A system of target setting has been introduced; however, it has yet to be embedded.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. Children in the Foundation Stage experience a wide range of high quality practical activities. It is firmly based on giving children first hand experiences; as a result, they have a good start to their education. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection.

The school provides a satisfactory taught curriculum for the pupils in Years 1 to 6. Although it is generally broad and balanced it is heavily weighted towards literacy and numeracy. This has had a positive impact in raising standards, especially in writing. However, it has had a negative effect on the standards achieved in other subjects. There is a lack of consistency in planning, with teachers often working in isolation and there is a failure to link subjects together to reinforce the acquisition of skills. There are not always enough planned opportunities for more capable pupils to learn at higher levels.

Pupils are given clear information about how to keep safe, to be healthy and accept responsibility. The pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities, organised to enhance the curriculum, especially the annual residential visits. They also visit a local special school to share physical education lessons, which is a strength of the school. Opportunities to take part in after-school clubs, including sporting and musical activities are well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The pupils feel safe and secure. There are clear procedures in place to support vulnerable children. Staff know the pupils well and are fully committed to their welfare quickly identifying pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities. Their progress is reviewed regularly and the school works closely with external agencies and with parents and carers. Pupils who do not speak English as a first language receive good support that is specifically tailored to their needs. As a result they make good progress.

The school carries out Health & Safety checks on a regular basis and risk assessments are fully in place. Great care is taken to ensure the environment is safe. The school is successfully helping to shape learners' attitudes to healthy living, including taking part in the Healthy Living Programme and drugs education initiatives.

There are very good procedures to ensure children settle quickly when they start school in the reception class and the school works hard to ensure there is a smooth transition to secondary education. Although the staff know the pupils well more could be done to monitor and analyse learners' progress and to ensure that pupils have a clearer understanding of what they need to do next in order to improve their work further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management overall are satisfactory.

The headteacher, supported by senior members of staff and an able governing body, are strong in promoting the ethos of the school. However, recent staffing difficulties (the school has been without a deputy headteacher for the last four terms), have meant leadership has not been sufficiently devolved and developed across the school. Not all subject leaders, for example, have a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their curriculum areas. The result of this is that the school's monitoring and self- evaluation programme is still at a developmental stage. Although the school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses, it has not always acted upon them. It is, however, doing so now. For example, it has begun a training programme in conjunction with the local authority to increase the confidence and skills of teachers in subject leadership.

The governors and headteacher manage the budget efficiently. However, costings are not always included in the school's improvement plan and available resources are not always prioritised to ensure pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Overall though, governance is good. Through their regular and planned visits to the school they are knowledgeable about its strengths and weaknesses and able to hold the school to account. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory and particularly successful in improving the quality of writing and provision in the Foundation Stage. Inspectors judge the school has the capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Burnley St James' Lanehead Church of England Primary School
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BB10 2NH

9 December 2005

Dear Children

As you know, two inspectors and myself visited your school recently. We all would like to thank you for making us feel welcome and being so willing to talk to us.

We looked at many of the things you do in school and talked with your teachers and some of the people who help you, as well as a few of your parents. This letter is to tell you a little of what we found out about your school.

Your behaviour is good and we know you enjoy coming to school. We very much liked the ways in which you help and care for each other. You, your parents and teachers are obviously proud of your school. Your parents really appreciate the work your headteacher and all the grown ups at the school do to make you happy.

You are trying hard in your lessons, particularly with writing. You are also trying to be healthy and eat sensibly.

Your school council represents all of you well.

We have asked your headteacher to make sure all of you do as well as you can in your learning so that more of you achieve the higher levels we think you are capable of.

We know everyone at your school will continue to work hard and we wish you every blessing for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools