

Burnley Brow Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105680
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	287293
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Ann Welch

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Jeremy Sutcliffe
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Lee
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2001
School address	Victoria Street Chadderton Oldham Lancashire OL9 0BY
Telephone number	0161 9113137
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school serves an inner urban area that has significant pockets of social and economic need. Almost all the pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage and most enter the Nursery with very little English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above that found nationally. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average although the number who have a statement of special educational needs is lower. The school is currently expanding to become a two-form entry school and is considerably larger than at the time of the last inspection. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including the Eco Silver Award, the Healthy Schools Award and the Investors in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Pupils talk about it with enthusiasm, affection and great pride. For example, one pupil's reflection that 'this school gives you the belief and confidence to go forward and to do your best' echoes the thoughts of many. This is a ringing endorsement of all that is on offer to pupils at Burnley Brow.

Many pupils start school with significant barriers to learning and for them to reach broadly average standards by the time they leave represents outstanding achievement. Indeed, the school has been in the top 5% in the country for four of the last five years. All staff play a significant part in this success. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers are very good at capturing and holding pupils' interest. They use a very good range of strategies and activities to keep pupils working hard. Not surprisingly, classrooms buzz with excitement and industry. Pupils are bursting with enthusiasm to explain what they are doing, why they are doing it and how well they are doing. Highly skilled teaching assistants, some of whom are bi-lingual, do a tremendous job supporting pupils who have English as an additional language and those who either have particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities or talents. All make excellent progress as a result.

Enjoyment of learning is given a high priority. The richness of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage ensures that children acquire a strong desire to learn. This continues throughout the school. Pupils encounter an excellent curriculum that not only gives them a very good grounding in basic skills but also helps them to develop into sociable and confident young people as they experience the wealth of events, visits and visitors to the school. Pupils of all ages are particularly motivated by the themed weeks, which give them a chance to work on a topic in depth.

Although the school provides strong academic support, it has not lost the realisation that without happy, well-behaved and caring pupils, academic achievement is likely to be limited. Consequently, much effort has gone into ensuring that pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and especially their cultural development is a strength of the provision. The outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils throughout the school play a huge part in their very effective learning and personal development. The school's strategies to ensure pupils' health and safety are extensive and very successful. For example, there are very detailed approaches to promoting and rewarding good behaviour based on the concept of 'respect'. These contribute strongly to the school's excellent sense of community and care.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, who is inspirational and totally committed to the success of the school, has the expertise and charisma to bring out the best in both adults and pupils. She is supported exceptionally well by the deputy headteacher. The school's own evaluations of its quality and provision are accurate. Governors are increasingly well-informed and are beginning to act as a critical as well as a supportive friend. Parents are understandably pleased with the quality of education provided for their children. Although this is a first-rate school, the staff are neither complacent nor content to stand still. This ensures an outstanding capacity to improve. The school gives excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

This outstanding school has an extremely clear view of how it can improve. These improvements are set out in the school development plan and there are no additional measures necessary beyond this plan.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Most children start school with very low personal, social, language and communication skills. Currently 98% of Nursery children have little or no English and just over half are reluctant speakers in their mother tongue. Children make excellent progress in the inspiring Foundation Stage environment, especially in their personal development, because of the bi-lingual support and excellent teaching they receive. They are working towards the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Recent enhancement of the transition between Reception and Year 1 has seen an improvement to good progress in Years 1 and 2. Although pupils achieve well here, many are still learning English or find reading and writing and mathematics difficult. By the end of Year 2, most are working effectively towards attaining the expected national standards.

Girls make better progress than boys in Years 3 to 6 although the gap is closing because the school is currently developing topics to whet the boys' appetite for learning. Pupils leave Year 6 with broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science and this represents outstanding progress. In the 2006 national tests the number reaching the higher levels in English and science were close to those reached nationally and were better than the national figure in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make extremely good progress because they have specially targeted support. The same is true of pupils who are more able or have a particular talent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

A strong emphasis on personal and social development for children in the Foundation Stage helps them to settle quickly, form really strong relationships and very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils throughout the school are extremely well behaved in lessons and at break times. They wear their 'Respect' badges with pride and say that they are determined not to lose them by acting in an irresponsible way. Attendance is broadly average thanks to an almost endless list of initiatives to improve it. Pupils show an excellent knowledge of what they need to do to stay healthy and all join in enthusiastically with the lunchtime keep fit and kite flying sessions on the playground. The links with the local community are outstanding and add valuable additional experiences. Regular visits from pupils who attend a neighbouring special school increase the sensitivity of Burnley Brow pupils to the needs of others. Many visitors, including some from other faiths and cultures, share their expertise and beliefs. One pupil, reflecting the views of others, commented, 'this is good because we get to find out what other people believe in and what is important to them.' Pupils take pride in their contributions to school development through the school council. 'We aim to make the school a better place', said one member proudly. An Inventing Club is the latest thing on their wish list!

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching engages pupils' interest so that they want to learn. Teaching basic skills in literacy, numeracy and science have a high priority and the outstanding use of modern technology by all staff to enhance and extend pupils' learning in these and other subject areas. Teachers have strong subject knowledge that is used very effectively to move lessons along at a cracking pace and to keep pupils on their toes. Special relationships between teachers and pupils are a very positive feature of all lessons and pupils respond very well to their teachers' high expectations of both behaviour and academic achievement. The bi-lingual support and the visual methods used, such as the interactive whiteboards, help those learning English to participate fully in lessons. Information from meticulous assessments of pupils' progress is used very effectively by staff to set challenging lesson objectives and to identify any pupils who may need additional help or support. Marking is positive and teachers are very good at getting pupils to recognise how well they are learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent school curriculum is relevant and focused on meeting the needs and interests of each pupil. The Foundation Stage curriculum is impressive in all areas of learning and children have many choices as to which exciting activity to take up. The focus on developing writing across the school is beginning to bear fruit and pupils competently apply their rapidly improving writing skills in other subjects. The links now forged between subjects are making pupils' learning more interesting and enjoyable. This is particularly the case for the very popular themed weeks such as the recent 'Achieve and Enjoy' week. For example, using camcorders to record the week not only develops pupils' skills in information and communication technology but also gives them the opportunity to reflect upon their experience. Work seen in personal, social and health education is excellent and helps pupils to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. They talk with pride about their Healthy Schools and Eco Silver awards. A very good range of school clubs attracts many pupils and enables them to develop aesthetic and sporting skills. The steel band is particularly impressive.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding care is given to pupils. At every level, high quality relationships give pupils the confidence to try new things and to enjoy their learning. Pupils are sure that they are safe and would be very well supported by staff if they had any needs or concerns. The introduction of 'the box', where pupils can note any worries they have, has helped to ensure that instances of bullying are rare. The 'Think Again Club' gives them the opportunity to reflect on any of their actions that are not in keeping with the school's Respect Charter. Teachers make extremely good use of the information from the school's outstanding assessment systems to set challenging targets in literacy and numeracy for each pupil. These motivate pupils well. One pupil summed up the views of others with the comment, 'you know what you have to achieve and how to help yourself.' Child protection procedures are in place and the school meets the latest guidelines on safeguarding pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management have set a very clear direction over the last four years. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a very powerful team. Their shared vision and extremely effective actions have led to the provision of high quality education for all pupils. Team work is given a high priority. As well as responsibility for the deployment of staff, classroom practice and assessment procedures, unit leaders have recently risen to the challenge to take on board responsibility for provision in all subjects for their age groups. This has been particularly successful and makes good use of everyone's strengths and expertise. Roles are interchangeable and everyone is involved in all aspects of provision. Consequently, there is a high level of commitment to improving the school and solid support for strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Regular and competent monitoring results in good and often outstanding teaching. The headteacher provides a strong lead in forging effective partnerships with parents, neighbouring schools and with the local community and businesses, all of which enhance pupils' personal development, their curriculum and promotes better teaching. The governing body fulfils its duties well and is able to hold the school to account despite the fact that, until recently, there has not been a full complement of governors.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Burnley Brow Community School, Chadderton, OL9 0BY

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school recently. You gave us lots of reasons why you think your school is special. We agree with you, in fact your school is outstanding and in the top 10% in the country. What an achievement!

Your school is a very caring school, you look after each other in a very kind way. Because you get on so well together your school is a very happy community. Everyone works very hard to make sure you do your best. Your teachers are very skilful at planning interesting lessons for you: they help you to achieve extremely well in English, mathematics and science. Your classroom assistants also give you lots of helpful support.

The curriculum you follow is often fun and you do lots of interesting things. We wish we had been able to visit during your recent themed week but the DVD you made of it helped us to see what a lot you learnt and how much you enjoyed taking part.

Your headteacher is excellent and leads and manages your school very well indeed. The deputy headteacher is also a very good leader and manager. Although Burnley Brow is a remarkable school, we know that there are plans to make it even better. We also know that you will play your part here. So, keep up the excellent work.

With best wishes for the future.