



Briercliffe Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119168
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291343
Inspection dates 3–4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Heather Evans

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Delamere Road
School category	Community		Briercliffe, Burnley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lancashire, BB10 2JU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 459421
Number on roll (school)	294	Fax number	01282 455744
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Roger Frost
		Headteacher	Mrs Karen Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 3–4 October 2006	Inspection number 291343
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. The proportion of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals is below average as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the few with English as an additional language speak English very well. The terraced housing around the school reflects the stable nature of the community. Children enter the Reception class with skills that are close to those expected of children of the same age. A new headteacher took up the leadership of the school in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils are sure that it is the right place for them to work and learn and their parents agree with them. Pupils learn at a good rate, achieve well and reach above average standards. The care for pupils is good and pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are growing into confident youngsters making the right choices about selecting a healthy lifestyle. The strong focus on personal development helps pupils to increase their social skills. Pupils' views are listened to and acted upon. They have been instrumental in improving facilities for playing outside, which now includes the well used 'Trim Trail'. In the wider community, they raise funds for local and national charities. These responsibilities and their developing academic skills prepare them well for the future and enhance their growing maturity and feelings of self-worth. A good curriculum is enriched by an interesting range of visits, clubs and activities that stimulate enthusiasm for learning. Good extra-curricular opportunities add to the pupils' obvious enjoyment of school.

Provision in the Reception classes is good. Good teaching enables children to progress well and reach the levels expected for this age. Good progress is sustained throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 because of effective teaching. Consequently, standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is good. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are making rapid progress because they are often challenged to work independently. Younger pupils do not always have enough opportunity to devise their own experiments and investigations or pursue independent research. This prevents their achievement from being better than good. The drive to improve writing, which was a priority for the school last year, has been successful. This year, teachers are maintaining pupils' success in this area and have made a successful start on the current priority, which is to improve pupils' skills of mental calculation in mathematics.

Leadership and management are good. The dedicated headteacher has developed enthusiasm among her staff with a clear vision for raising levels of achievement across all subjects. She is ably supported by her deputy, staff and governors. All are involved in self-evaluation and the school has an accurate view of what is working well and what needs attention. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection and has a good capacity to improve. Recent improvements include raising standards of independent writing and improving the information and communication technology (ICT) provision. Its ambition to provide as well as possible for pupils is evident in all planned activities. Finances are managed well and the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend pupils' abilities to think, work and learn independently by promoting more opportunities for private study and personal research.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children in Reception make good progress and attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are above average and have been for a number of years. Records show that pupils' progress in each key stage has never been less than satisfactory since the last inspection and is good overall. Pupils' achievement is good and no group of pupils underachieves. Work in other subjects reflects the same pleasing standards. Much of this success is because teachers plan diligently and offer pupils a good range of resources from which to learn. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given good opportunities for personal study and independent research. They use the reference library and the computer suite well and, as a result, many pupils are beginning to achieve very well indeed.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are taught well and receive well-targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, including their spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory because pupils have limited opportunities locally to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils are full of praise for the school, and one spoke for them all by saying, 'This school is fantastic'. Good teaching provides interesting activities that capture pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils enjoy learning and are willing to work hard. Attendance is above average. Good relationships are a strong feature of the school. Pupils are sensible and behave very well, both in lessons and outside during their free time. The school is working towards the National Healthy School Status, and pupils understand that physical activities and a good diet help them to be healthy. Older pupils particularly appreciate the Trim Trail. Pupils feel safe in school and know that there is always an adult to turn to for help. Older pupils relish opportunities to take on responsibilities and take initiative. For example, older pupils are preparing to make a request for a wider and more exciting range of reading books. The school council instigated a successful paper recycling project, and show great concern for their environment. Pupils engage in local community activities, including links with the bowls club and church groups. Good academic standards, social development and ICT skills prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and lead to good progress. Teaching is effective in the Foundation Stage where children benefit from well planned practical learning activities and play.

Pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to participate in learning. Skilled support staff work closely with teachers. This ensures that pupils' needs are met, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Planning is good and teachers match work well to pupils' previous experiences. The recently revised assessment system is robust and enables learning activities to be closely targeted to pupils' different needs. Pupils know how well they are doing and what to do to improve because their work is marked carefully and teachers give clear pointers to pupils to show them how to improve. A few lessons lack challenge and excitement and learning is held back. This is sometimes because there is too little opportunity for pupils to find things out for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curricular provision is good and meets the needs of pupils well. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy stimulating and exciting learning activities in a very attractive environment, giving them a good start to their education. Improved ICT facilities enhance support for pupils' learning. An extended programme of physical education has contributed greatly to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, and a broader music curriculum offers a wide range of musical activities. This is reflected in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils say how much they enjoy lessons and really appreciate visitors to the school who stimulate their curiosity. They enjoy visits, in particular the outdoor pursuits visit to Askrigg. The curriculum is well focused on providing opportunities to improve pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Priority has been given to strengthening the organisation of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this is done well. Extra provision for gifted and talented pupils is in the very early stages of planning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support in the school are good. The school pays good attention to ensuring pupils' health and safety. Child protection procedures are in place and the school has central up-to-date records of the statutory checks carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau for all personnel. Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin the good care and support. Staff know pupils and their personal needs very well and so pupils feel secure in school and grow in confidence.

A new and rigorous system for tracking the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps staff to provide well targeted support based on accurate individual educational plans. Pupils have targets set for them in English and mathematics that arise from the school's rigorous assessment system. These are allocated to a group of pupils of similar ability. The targets help pupils to understand how to improve their work but they are not yet refined to match every individual's specific needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, appointed in 2005, is energetic and highly committed to the school and the local community. She has forged a very effective partnership with her deputy. They have been very successful in sharing a clear vision for how they want the school to develop with the whole staff. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development because there is an intensive programme of monitoring and evaluating planning and teaching. They bring about improvements with a real sense of urgency. As a direct result of the leadership of the new headteacher, there is a determination among staff to increase the challenge to all pupils and improve their achievement even further. Furthermore, pupils are alert to the headteacher's drive for good manners and healthy living that has made a positive difference to how they behave in and around school. Subject co-ordinators lead their subjects well. They have made a good start on analysing pupils' performance closely and identifying where each pupil can improve further. The school council plays an important role in contributing to the management of the school's everyday life. The governing body hold the school to account. They are in full support of what the senior managers are seeking to achieve.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Briercliffe Primary School

Delamere Road

Briercliffe

Burnley

Lancashire

BB10 2JU

3 October 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school to see how you work and play with your friends and listen to your teachers. We enjoyed our visit very much. We found out a lot about how you learn and these are some of the things that we liked best.

Your school is a bright, happy and friendly place. You know that already because you told us it was fantastic and explained how much you enjoy school. We enjoyed seeing how well you worked with one another in lessons and when playing outside. You have a good understanding about healthy living, organising the paper recycling programme and helping to care for the environment. You are developing well into responsible young people who understand how to behave and how to live safe and healthy lives. You get pleasing results in your tests because you come to school every day except when you are ill.

You are pleased with your increasing skills, particularly your reading. Indeed you like reading so much that you would like some more exciting books. I think you will find that your teachers are ready to help you choose some new materials to increase the range of interesting and exciting stories. You told us that your teachers have begun to help you to do more mental calculation in mathematics and explained why you think you need to learn your multiplication tables. You are right; good results in mathematics will help you to get better jobs when you are older. Some of you could do more for yourselves and you need to do more independent work. I know that your teachers will help you to make research tasks enjoyable. Planning investigations and experiments is good fun. You will be able to use your skills in reading and ICT to find out new facts and tell your friends about what you have discovered. You and your teachers have some good ideas and plans for this work. It won't always be easy but you will feel so proud when it is your own work on display that is not like that of anyone else.

Thank you again for letting us share your ideas and see how much you enjoy your work and play.

Heather Evans

Lead inspector