



Burton Manor Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124202
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292921
Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006
Reporting inspector Melvyn Blackband

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Uplands Road
School category	Community		Stafford
Age range of pupils	4–11		ST17 9PS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01785 356900
Number on roll (school)	275	Fax number	01785 356901
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	John Eaves
		Headteacher	Roger Siddle
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Burton Manor is an average sized primary school. Many of the pupils are taught in mixed age classes. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. None of the few pupils from minority ethnic groups is at the early stages of learning to speak English. The headteacher has been in post for just over one year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Burton Manor provides a satisfactory quality of care and education. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well and have good attitudes to learning, reflecting the school's positive management of behaviour, good relationships and the emphasis on spiritual and moral values. Standards are satisfactory, although pupils' performance in English tends to be stronger and in science relatively weaker. The school's results in the 2006 national assessments for seven year olds showed a dip in standards of writing. The school is taking steps to improve writing which are starting to have a positive effect. The standards and quality of provision in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should because assessment is not used consistently to set sufficiently challenging learning goals. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The areas identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. The headteacher is committed to improving achievement and has an accurate view of the areas of the school's work which need to be better. Effective monitoring by the senior leadership team has resulted in improvements in teaching and learning, indicating that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Although teaching is satisfactory, work in lessons is not always sufficiently well-matched to the differing capabilities of the pupils in each class and at times this constrains their learning. Pupils are set targets for their learning, but these are often too general and do not provide a clear enough idea of how pupils should improve their work. The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched by a good range of activities that take pupils out of the classroom to learn new things in different situations. The school's good systems for looking after pupils' welfare help to promote good gains in their personal development. The school works effectively in partnership with other agencies to support pupils with additional learning needs. Links with the local sports college are good and contribute to pupils' enjoyment of physical activity. Pupils are encouraged to adopt safe practices and healthy lifestyles and are given opportunities to make a positive contribution to the community. Parents are happy with what the school provides and confident that their children will be safe, well cared for and free from bullying.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in science.
- Accelerate the progress of pupils whose writing skills are less well developed.
- Use assessment more consistently to track pupils' progress and to set targets that are realistic and challenging.
- Give pupils work that is matched well to their capabilities and which provides sufficient challenge to enable them all to make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children start in the Reception class they have a wide range of skills, but most have skills that are at the levels expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress to reach average standards by the time they start in Year 1. By the time they leave in Year 6, most pupils have made satisfactory progress to attain standards that are broadly average, with English test results relatively better than those in science. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their starting points. The school's results in the national assessments for seven year olds have been broadly average for the last few years. However, the provisional results for 2006 show a dip in standards, particularly in writing. In particular, more capable pupils did not do as well as they should. The school is aware of this underachievement and has worked hard to accelerate these pupils' progress by improving aspects of teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well and thoroughly enjoy school. Several pupils told inspectors that, 'We wish we could stay at the school forever.' They feel safe and free from bullying or intimidation. The school is calm and pupils work and socialise happily because they know what is expected of their behaviour. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their cultural understanding is developed particularly well through links with schools in other countries. Appropriate programmes of personal, social and health education equip pupils with a good understanding of how to keep safe and to value exercise and a healthy lifestyle. However, their understanding of relationships and how their bodies change as they grow up is less well developed. Pupils get on well with each other and with staff. They welcome the newly formed school council and feel that their views are taken seriously. The progress pupils make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) helps to prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Action taken by the senior leadership team to improve the quality of teaching has been effective. Rigorous monitoring and support have led to recent improvements in teaching which are having a positive impact on learning. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good and was underpinned by positive relationships with pupils, which motivated them to work hard and do their best. Although lesson planning has improved, it does not routinely take enough account of the different abilities of the pupils, especially in the mixed age classes. Teachers do not always expect enough

of their pupils. In addition, the quality of marking varies too widely and does not show pupils clearly enough how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is complemented by a good range of well-organised activities which do much to promote pupils' personal development and enrich their cultural and social development. Opportunities in sport and music are good with high levels of participation and success. The exchanges with other schools through the Comenius scheme open pupils' eyes to the wider world. French is introduced in Year 6 and, linked to visits in France, is an effective taster for secondary school. There is, however, insufficient planning to meet the abilities of different aged pupils when two year groups are taught at the same time in the mixed age classes. This is particularly the case in science where it constrains pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents are appreciative of the safe and caring environment the school provides for its pupils. Child protection procedures are efficient, the necessary checks on staff are in place and health and safety issues are rigorously monitored and attended to. The progress of pupils with additional learning needs is carefully monitored and they make satisfactory progress as a result of the good support they receive. There are good relations with neighbouring secondary schools and older pupils feel well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Although pastoral aspects are good, the school does not set sufficiently challenging targets for all pupils. The guidance they receive about how to improve their work is often too general and pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to progress more quickly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the school has established a safe, happy environment for pupils, which supports their good personal development. The headteacher is providing clear direction for school improvement and the rigour the team applies to monitoring and evaluating pupils' performance is good. The governing body has a satisfactory knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offers increasingly effective support and challenge. Parents feel involved in their children's education. Communication within the school is good. The staff feel consulted and valued and are benefiting from recently introduced procedures to manage their performance. The school's leadership has devoted considerable time to auditing and monitoring the school's effectiveness and is focusing its work appropriately on the areas requiring improvement.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

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

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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

- Not long ago, three of us came to your school to find out how well you were doing. Thank you for helping us with our work. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing some of the things you were doing. You are making good progress in learning how to look after yourselves and how to get on with others, and the school's adults look after you well. Although most of you are making satisfactory progress in your learning, some of you are not doing as well as you should and we felt that this may be partly because you don't have a clear enough idea of how to improve your work. Many of you are doing better in English than in mathematics and science, but some of you are not doing so well as you should in writing. The school is already changing for the better but there are a few more things teachers can do to make sure you are all making as much progress as you should in lessons. These are the things we have asked the school to do.
- Help you to improve your achievement in science.
- Help some of you to speed up your progress in writing
- Keep a careful check on how well you are doing and give you targets to help you make better progress.
- Provide you with activities that help you all to learn well, especially those of you who are capable of harder work. You can help too, by taking notice of the comments teachers write in your books when they mark your work, and by working hard to achieve your targets. Thank you for making us welcome in your school. We wish you well in the future.