



Burstow Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125292
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293255
Inspection dates 27–28 September 2006
Reporting inspector Heather Yaxley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wheelers Lane
School category	Foundation		Smallfield
Age range of pupils	4–11		Horley RH6 9PT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01342 842010
Number on roll (school)	302	Fax number	01342 842935
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Laura Bechelet
		Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Hampson
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 27–28 September 2006	Inspection number 293255
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Burstow is a large primary school with a nursery in a semi-rural setting. Pupils represent a wide range of family backgrounds including up to 12% from Traveller communities. More than a third of the pupils' parents returned the questionnaires and the vast majority of parents showed that they have confidence in the school's work.

The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below average. The school has strong links with the local church is part of the Horley Learning Partnership and has accreditation for Investors in People. At the time of this inspection, the school had an acting deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Burstow Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It is an inclusive school, proud to meet the needs of all pupils within the local community, including those with learning difficulties, children that are looked after by the local authority and pupils from different cultural backgrounds. The staff work well together as a team. They are strongly supportive of each other and effectively provide a good level of pastoral care. Together they successfully promote a calm, orderly and purposeful learning environment in which all pupils make steady progress.

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school very much. They arrive promptly each morning and the way in which they are ready to start lessons after break-times is very impressive. Particular strengths of the school are the wide range of opportunities for all pupils to go on visits and to join in clubs at the end of the day. These not only contribute to enjoyment in learning but also to pupils making good choices for healthy living. At times, there are tensions between the different groups of pupils but whilst there are a few instances of poor behaviour from a small minority of pupils this is not widespread or linked to any particular group in school.

A new curriculum is in place. It is satisfactory and its full impact is not yet clear, but it is already getting positive feedback from pupils who say that lessons are 'fun, practical and interesting'. Pupils are generally attentive in lessons and respond well to teachers, but do not always know how well they are doing because not all of them are involved enough in assessing their own work and knowing how to meet targets that are set for them. Teaching is satisfactory but some teachers are not yet consistently making checks on how well pupils are progressing towards their targets. For these reasons, pupils reach average standards when they leave the school from below average starting points and their achievement remains satisfactory. Standards in writing are not as good as those in other subjects.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is also satisfactory and there have been some good improvements since the last inspection. However, staff recognise that there is still more to do in this area of the school's work. The majority of children enter the Nursery with limited skills and, whilst staff give a sound focus to developing their language, not enough is done to develop their vocabulary, speaking, and listening.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders and managers know their school well, accurately identifying areas for improvement. Senior staff, together with governors, monitor the work of the school satisfactorily. However, monitoring is not always focused sufficiently on clear targets for improvement. As a result, evaluations lack rigour and there are some missed opportunities to support staff in raising achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly in writing.
- Involve pupils more consistently in the assessment of their own work.

- Strengthen systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the school's work by setting clear targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Pupils make satisfactory progress and there are no significant differences in the achievements of different groups. Standards are low when pupils start school and most are not yet working at the expected levels by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. Results over the past three years show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have dipped slightly, especially in writing. However, pupils achieve the levels of work expected for their age and ability by the time they reach the end of Year 6, and there have been improvements in mathematics over the past two years. In 2005, pupils' progress overall in English was good at the end of Key Stage 2, although standards in writing lag behind those in other subjects. The school has already identified that this is an area that needs to be developed and has put strategies in place to bring about improvements.

Teachers assess work accurately and challenging targets are set, but not always met. This is because teachers are not yet keeping a close enough check on how pupils are progressing towards those targets. As a result, opportunities to take action to remedy potential under-achievement are missed and evaluation of how well different groups are doing is limited.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory with some areas that are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, and adults successfully help pupils to develop sensitivity towards others and to appreciate differences. Behaviour is an on-going focus. Inappropriate behaviour is managed well by staff, especially that shown by a small minority of pupils who sometimes disrupt and worry others. The vast majority of pupils behave well, particularly the younger ones. Most pupils work and play happily together, with minimal intervention from adults. They use the Buddy system to maintain positive relationships and to keep one another safe. Attitudes towards learning are usually good, particularly when lessons require pupils to be active and take initiative.

Pupils are not only supportive of one another but also towards those in the wider community who are less fortunate than themselves. They have raised impressive amounts of money for charity and overseas projects. A good awareness of what makes a 'good citizen' is being developed well through the work of the school council which is very active in informing senior staff of things that could be better. They feel that they help to make changes and that 'if there wasn't a school council, the teachers wouldn't have their workroom'. All of these skills, together with the satisfactory

progress they make in their basic skills, prepare pupils adequately for the next stage in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but with good elements and, as a result, pupils' progress is satisfactory. Most teachers make good use of questions to assess and consolidate pupils' understanding. Work is generally well matched to the needs of pupils and this adds to their good attitudes and enjoyment and steady progress. In one lesson, where they were totally engaged by a taped story and discussion, a pupil said 'it's a bit hard and a bit easy and we have to think!' Well-informed teaching assistants give good support but are not always fully involved, especially at the start of lessons. Some teachers do not consistently share the objectives of a lesson with pupils, or use them to help them assess their own understanding of what they have learnt. In addition, the quality of marking varies throughout the school and does not always relate to what is learned.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory for all pupils including the youngest. The school is beginning to be innovative with its curriculum. It has very recently introduced a scheme to develop links between subjects, aiming to make the curriculum more relevant and interesting for pupils. This has already made a positive difference to pupils' enjoyment of lessons. One pupil said 'It mixes the subjects together and I like it more because it makes you think'.

An extensive range of enrichment activities supports pupils' personal and academic development well, and this is a strength. For example, the wide variety of after school activities has a high participation rate as do the residential visits to the Isle of Wight and to France.

The youngest pupils experience a suitably broad curriculum. It covers all the areas of learning but activities are not planned sufficiently to meet the interests and previous learning of all children. The school has grouped pupils by ability in Years 3 to 6 for English and mathematics and this effectively ensures that the curriculum for these subjects matches learning needs for all abilities, especially in mathematics where there have been good improvements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of care, guidance and support but pastoral support is good and a strength of the school. Pupils are well known to staff

and receive good personal and social care in a safe and secure environment. Child protection and health and safety procedures meet requirements and early identification for vulnerable pupils is good. Pupils receive satisfactory academic guidance because although information is collected, it is not yet being used consistently enough to support the raising of standards and pupils' achievement. Not all pupils have sufficient knowledge of their personal targets in order for them to achieve higher standards. One pupil said of her targets 'if you don't have a target you don't know what to do to achieve.' However, many other pupils, especially the younger ones, are not clear about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Staff are steadfast and successful in their commitment to ensure that Burstow is an inclusive school. Governors are great advocates for the school, supporting staff in promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. This is enriched further through the staff's good involvement with local services and partnerships and leads to the good level of pastoral care given to pupils and their families and to the staff.

The headteacher and senior staff have shown a strong commitment to enriching the curriculum and improving teaching. They actively encourage staff to gain further qualifications and experience and this is helping staff to improve their practice. For example, support staff are well trained and benefit from good opportunities for professional development offered at a London university. The challenge for the senior staff now is to improve the systems for monitoring provision so that they have a stronger focus on raising pupils' achievement. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been addressed well and the school is already taking the right steps to tackle areas identified for development, demonstrating that the school has a sound capacity to improve. The school works within a tight budget and this, together with the standard of pupils' achievement, represents satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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	3
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

You may remember that we came to inspect your school at the end of September. I am writing to thank you for helping us get to know your school and to tell you what we found out. We have thought about everything that you told us and showed us. Many of your families completed the questionnaire and we have also considered their comments.

We found that Burstow Primary is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. We could see very clearly that you like coming to school and were impressed with how quickly you get on with your work. We were very pleased to see how many of you stay after school to join clubs and think that staff work very hard to give you lots of opportunities for extra activities and trips.

We think that you will achieve more in your class work if staff help you to know more about how well you are doing and how to reach your targets. We have also asked your headteacher to help staff keep a better check on how much you are learning.

I wish you well in all that you do in school this year.

Thank you

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector