

Burnt Ash Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101597
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	307750
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	413
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	74
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ismath Hussain
Headteacher	Mrs Leah Crawley
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rangefield Road Bromley BR1 4QX
Telephone number	020 8697 2441
Fax number	020 8695 5945

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a diverse residential community of social, privately rented and owner-occupied housing. More than a quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Over a third are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is also above average. The number who are learning English as an additional language is in line with national figures. About a third of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is above average. Most of these difficulties are moderate learning. The school has a special opportunities unit (SOU) for pupils with severe learning difficulties, and the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is very high. Mobility is high. The school offers families a children centre and before and after school care. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) may attend the pre-school nursery before they enter the Reception class. The current headteacher has been in post for one term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Burnt Ash Primary is a good school, where pupils achieve well and get a good start to their education. Pupils are happy at the school. 'I really love it here', said one, while another liked school because, 'all the teachers are nice.' Parents are pleased with the choice they have made for their children. Several commented that staff are supportive, approachable and helpful, while others said that their children were welcomed and nurtured.

Pupils learn well at the school because they are taught well. Teachers make lessons challenging and stimulating, and plan their work carefully to meet the different needs of the learners in their classes. The curriculum is interesting and well balanced, and some good links between subjects are being developed. History work on the London Blitz, for example, inspired Year 6 pupils to write creatively in their English lesson.

Because of what goes on in the classroom, pupils make good progress across the school. When they arrive in the EYFS, they have an overall level of skills which is very low compared with what is expected for their age, but by the time they leave the school they reach standards which are in line with those expected nationally. The school has identified that progress in mathematics has slowed recently compared with English and science, and results in this year's tests at the end of Year 6 were lower in mathematics. This is because pupils sometimes lack the skills to do practical work, and the vocabulary to explain their thinking.

Pupils enjoy school and behave well indoors and outside in the playground. They have an excellent understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and are very keen to be active and take part in sport. Their relationships with others are good, and they are pleased to have the chance to play an active role in the life of the school community. Most pupils attend well, but there is a small minority whose families do not always make sure that they come to school regularly and on time. As a result, attendance levels dipped slightly last year after a period of improvement.

The school does its best to support pupils and their families, so that all pupils are able to learn and develop as well as they can. It has built very strong links with outside agencies, and offers a wide range of support on site. Pupils are very well cared for and their needs are well met. Those with moderate learning difficulties and those at the early stages of learning English are well supported in lessons, so they make similar progress to their classmates. The SOU offers pupils with severe learning difficulties a calm yet stimulating environment. Parents are very appreciative of this.

The headteacher has made an energetic start, pinpointing the priorities for improvement and carrying the staff with her. She is very capably supported by the deputy and the senior leadership team. They have good systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and tracking the progress of pupils, and use these well to bring about improvement. Senior staff have rightly identified that the next step is to ensure that all subject leaders have the skills and opportunity to take responsibility for monitoring and improving teaching and learning in their areas, in order to drive up standards still further. The school has a good capacity for future improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle quickly in the pre-school nursery and the Reception class because of the very positive relationships with adults and the close partnership staff forge with their parents. The children find this reassuring and it helps build their confidence so that they can explore the wide range of exciting activities available to them. They make good progress during their time in the EYFS despite their low starting points. Excellent attention is given to children's welfare. There are robust procedures to keep children safe and healthy, and high levels of supervision at all times.

The EYFS is well led, and improvements are carefully planned and prioritised. Recent changes to the building have made a real difference to children's learning and development, allowing them to access resources and choose activities more freely. The next step identified for improvement is to co-ordinate the planning of activities between the pre-school and the Reception class. The current lack of co-ordination leads to some loss in continuity of learning for the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics by improving pupils' practical and language skills.
- Develop the role of subject leaders to take responsibility for achievement and standards in their subjects.
- Work with families to improve the attendance and punctuality of a minority of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with a range of skills which are well below expectations for their age, particularly in literacy and in their social development. They make good progress, reaching standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are below average by the time they leave Year 2. The school has made good use of its tracking data over the last year to identify pupils likely to reach the higher levels in their work, and has given them extra help. As a result, the numbers reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in their end of Year 2 assessments rose significantly.

In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress, so that they leave the school reaching average standards. There has been a picture of steady improvement over recent years, apart from last year's dip in mathematics. The school is beginning to tackle this through an increased focus on investigative tasks and mathematical language, but there is still more work to be done.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have very enthusiastic attitudes to school and their lessons, and get on well with others. They have a strong sense of social and moral awareness, and the school is developing their understanding of our multi-cultural society well. Pupils feel safe as there are very few incidents of bullying or racism and they know that there is always an adult to help them. The high profile given to developing healthy lifestyles is paying dividends. Pupils' enjoyment of physical exercise

was clearly apparent in the 'Team Superschools' challenge which took place during the inspection.

Pupils are keen to be involved in the school community, for example as members of the school council or as play leaders. They willingly raise money for charities abroad, showing their concern for those in need elsewhere in the world. Pupils' behaviour is good, thanks to the hard work of the school and the recent introduction of 'golden rules' which have motivated pupils. Their attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection, though it dipped again last year to just below average. A small proportion of pupils are still persistently absent. Pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education. Their basic literacy, numeracy and computer skills are satisfactory, though their social skills are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to achieve well. Teachers typically set a good pace in lessons, explaining the objectives for learning clearly and checking pupils' understanding regularly. They plan their lessons carefully and organise their support staff well, so that tasks for pupils are well matched to their particular needs and help is at hand if required. There is a good level of challenge and high expectations for what pupils can achieve, particularly in English. In mathematics, expectations are sometimes lower, and pupils are not always clear about what they have to do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a good balance and coverage of all subjects, giving pupils good opportunities to develop their creativity and their practical skills. It is broad enough to appeal to all pupils, including those with severe or moderate learning difficulties, and those new to learning English. A good programme of visits and visitors helps bring learning to life. Senior staff are aware of the need to make sure that the curriculum offers pupils the chance to develop their mathematical skills more fully and to use their computer skills more widely.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Excellent pastoral care means that pupils feel very safe, secure and ready to learn.

The staff are very responsive to individuals and relationships between adults and children are very supportive. The school has established comprehensive links with external professionals to ensure pupils' well-being. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils fully meet requirements and health and safety are managed well. The before and after school clubs offer pupils good care outside the school day.

Academic guidance is good. The school uses its assessment systems very well to identify pupils who need extra support and give them the help they need. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, giving them encouraging feedback. Some give useful guidance on what pupils can do to improve further and meet their targets, though this is not consistent throughout the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The senior leadership team gives very strong direction to the school and has a clear overview of its strengths and areas for development through good self-evaluation processes. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are particularly good. Consequently, the school has high yet realistic expectations for their achievement, and sets itself challenging targets which are met. There is a strong sense of team spirit and a focus on professional development for staff. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about their areas, and keen to take on more responsibility.

The school plays an active role in the community and offers valuable services and facilities to local families, for example through its children centre. Good use is made of funds to improve provision for pupils, such as the recent redevelopment of the Reception class. Governors fulfil their role well. They have a good understanding of the school's successes and its needs, and they provide it with the right balance of support and challenge.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

07 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnt Ash Primary School, Bromley, BR1 4QX

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. We agree with you and your parents that Burnt Ash is a good school, and we could tell that you enjoy going there. You are doing well in your lessons, because your teachers know what you need and give you work that is right for you.

We were impressed with your good behaviour in school and in the playground, and we thought that you all get on together very well. The staff take very good care of you, and those of you who need extra help are well supported.

The headteacher and her staff run the school well, and know how to make it even better in future. We have agreed that they are going to make sure that you all get the chance to do as well you possibly can in mathematics, and that you all come to school regularly and on time. They are also going to give some teachers extra responsibilities in the school.

You can do your bit by always telling your teachers if there is anything that you don't understand in your mathematics lessons. You can also do your best to make sure you never miss school unless you are ill, and ask your families not to take you away on holiday during term time.

Well done to you all, and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield

Lead Inspector