

Burbage Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112520
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310911
Inspection date	6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Cook HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roger Cooper
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Guttman
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004
School address	Cavendish Avenue Burbage Buxton SK17 9AT
Telephone number	01298 22278
Fax number	01298 22278

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how much progress do children make in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year group), how effective has the school been in improving the teaching and learning of mathematics, and how the school is improving writing standards. The inspector scrutinised school documents, observed lessons, analysed test results, looked at parent questionnaires and talked with the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and two governors, including the chair. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that, the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Burbage is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion whose first language is not English. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also much lower than the national average.

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 where standards over the last few years have improved and remain high. Children enjoy school: their behaviour is outstanding. They work hard and have very positive attitudes about their life at school. Attendance is good and children's personal development is a strength of the school. Relationships between children and staff are very positive and the school enjoys a calm and purposeful atmosphere.

Children start school with above average skills. By the end of Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are high and by the end of Year 6 a much higher proportion than average reach the highest level possible. These high standards reflect the children's willingness to learn and the good teaching they receive. Teaching is good in most lessons. Lessons are well thought out and based on high expectations. Although teaching is good and test results to some extent prove this, more could be done to help children know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. For example, teachers' marking varies in quality. In a few cases, more so in English, it is excellent, pointing out what a child has done well and giving them clear direction as to how to improve. However, there is a lot of marking that does not give this academic guidance. Likewise, the use of curriculum targets is underdeveloped across the school and so children are not always given a target to aim for. These aspects of the school's work are satisfactory and therefore overall care guidance and support has been judged satisfactory.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is an emphasis on teaching the core skills learned in English and mathematics and, in these areas, the school has been particularly effective. This is especially so in the case of writing, where standards are very high. Right from reception, children are encouraged to be independent writers. Children's enthusiasm for writing continues throughout the school and the language and style of their writing often shows their maturity and enriched vocabulary. Other areas of the curriculum are also very strong. For example, the art work around the school is very good and shows a high level of skill and creativity. Music is also another success story, with many children involved in music tuition, a school ensemble and all children in Years 3-6 learning the recorder. Because of this good provision, the local authority has recently presented the school with an award that celebrates the school's effective support given to instrumental teaching. A successful recent curriculum initiative has seen the whole school teach different subjects through one theme. 'Caverns and Caves' was the most recent theme, which generated some impressive art and English work. To add to the curriculum, there is a satisfactory range of extra clubs that children can join. These take place weekly, occasionally or seasonally and most are for older children.

Pastoral care for children is generally good. A number of the parent questionnaires raised concerns about safety and the way in which children enter and leave school. The governors and headteacher are aware of these concerns; they have taken reasonable action, considering the difficulties of the school site. The school does have sensible plans to make further improvements when the new classroom block has been built.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has successfully balanced his pastoral responsibilities with the need to challenge professionally all staff to develop and work together to improve the school. There is a determination to sustain the good education provided and make further improvements and the school has good capacity to do this. A good example of this is the school's current focus on evaluating teaching and

learning in mathematics. For example, good use has been made of test data to identify a small group of children who have been given extra support so that they can reach their potential. Governors also provide good leadership. They are excited about the potential of the new classroom block to improve the school but also continue to keep a check on the school's work. The school places a significant emphasis on the role of subject co-ordinator. These co-ordinators have the responsibility to improve both teaching and learning for a particular subject and are asked to complete a rigorous audit of their effectiveness each year. Governors have a good routine to monitor and support this work. Each co-ordinator has a link governor who finds out about current developments and then reports to the governing body. However, although the role of subject co-ordinator is well established, literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have not been given enough opportunities to find out first hand what is happening in classrooms.

What is on offer at Burbage ensures children make good progress and personally develop into mature, confident children. The school promotes good spiritual and moral development and an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. By the time they are ready to leave Burbage children have gained the literacy and numeracy skills that will enable them to make a good start at their next school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enjoy their first year in school. Classrooms are organised to be exciting, stimulating places where children are encouraged to learn. Teaching is good and enthusiastic and children respond well. Children are encouraged to talk and explain what they know and think, which promotes good speaking and listening. The work given to children is generally well matched to their needs, but at times, the more able could be challenged even more. The foundation stage co-ordinator is well organised and leads by example. By the end of the reception year, children have made good progress and reach standards that are above what is expected for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that subject leaders, especially those for English and mathematics have more opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.
- Give children better academic guidance so that they know what to do to improve.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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.

Annex A

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 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

7 November 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Burbage Primary School, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 9AT

I am writing to tell you about my recent visit to your school. When I was there, I was very impressed with your excellent behaviour and the way that you worked so hard in your lessons. I decided that you belong to a good school. Your headteacher and teachers are doing a good job along with all the other adults that work at Burbage. You have good lessons in English and mathematics, which are helping you to make good progress. I really enjoyed reading some of your wonderful writing and I was impressed with the artwork that you do and the special musical skills some of you have.

Every school needs to keep working hard to improve so I have asked Mr Guttman if he could do two things to make sure your school gets even better. First, I have asked him to organise the teachers who are responsible for different subjects to visit your classes and look at your work so that they can see how well you are doing. Secondly, I have asked him to make sure that you always know how well you have done in your lessons and what you should do to improve your work.

I hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy school.

Best wishes

Andrew Cook HMI