

Bursledon Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116027
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312152
Inspection dates	6–7 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	274
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Lawson (Vice)
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Parker
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2004
School address	Long Lane Bursledon Southampton SO31 8BZ
Telephone number	02380 402738
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school is on the outskirts of Southampton and mainly draws its pupils from the immediate vicinity. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. The school has a Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People status and Healthy Schools Advanced Status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to improve.

Bursledon Junior School has shown some improvement over recent months but has weaknesses in important areas and is ineffective overall. Despite some strengths in teaching, this is inadequate overall and leads to inadequate achievement. The school has not put effective actions in place to address a legacy of underachievement in writing and mathematics. Senior leaders have had insufficient impact upon raising standards. The senior leadership team and subject leaders do not monitor effectively how well pupils achieve across the school to identify exactly what needs to be done to improve. An exception to this is the reading programme, which is led and managed well and is having a positive effect on standards in reading. The governing body does not challenge the school sufficiently and has not checked its progress since the last inspection. The school's view of its own effectiveness is too generous and is not based on systematic evaluation by leaders at all levels. There has been inadequate progress since the last inspection. These combined weaknesses in leadership mean the school does not have the capacity to improve without external help and support.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactorily promoted. Pupils are very knowledgeable about following healthy lifestyles and most try hard to do this. They are also good at helping around the school and supporting fund-raising. Pupils are courteous to visitors, and keen to talk about their work. Most pupils behave well. However, pupils and parents expressed concerns about inappropriate behaviour, mainly in Year 6, which they report often affects other pupils' learning. A significant minority of pupils also report instances of bullying and that some pupils are teased because of their race or beliefs, which they do not like.

Some good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching was seen during the inspection but pupils' books show that work is not adapted well enough to cater for their differing needs. Teaching is inadequate overall because it is not leading to secure learning and achievement for all groups of pupils. The deputy headteacher has improved the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and this has helped to increase teachers' awareness of the pupils who are working at below average levels. Teachers are not as aware of the pupils who have underachieved in the past and who need to make rapid progress. The school has now ensured there is a shared understanding of the progress that pupils should be making from year to year. However, the improved tracking systems are still at a very early stage and have not had enough of an impact upon pupils' achievement. In most cases, teachers are not using assessments and targets well enough to bring about better learning and progress. Pupils know how to improve their work in a few classes and sets but this is not consistent across the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve leadership and management and ensure that leaders at all levels evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately and have a strong impact upon improving achievement.
- Ensure pupils make more rapid progress in writing and mathematics.
- Improve behaviour to eliminate instances of uncaring and disruptive behaviour, including racial incidents.

- Make better use of assessments and targets to guide teachers' planning and ensure lessons provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Pupils do better in reading and science than in writing and mathematics. National tests show that pupils have not made satisfactory progress over the last three years, when their starting points are taken into account. Targets for mathematics were not met in last year's national tests. Data provided by the school during the inspection, and evidence of external monitoring by the local authority, indicate that the school is again unlikely to meet its targets for mathematics this year. Writing and mathematics have been priorities for improvement for several years and both were identified as weaker aspects at the last inspection. Some steps have been taken, such as the focus on problem-solving and setting pupils by ability in mathematics but these have had too little impact. The school's data show that many pupils make insufficient progress in writing and a significant proportion underachieve in mathematics. This also applies to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are some stronger aspects. Pupils in Year 5 make better progress than pupils in other years. Pupils in Year 4 made better progress in writing and mathematics in the autumn term than they did throughout the whole of last year in these two areas, although they are still behind where they should be. The school's reading programme is having a marked effect upon attitudes to reading and standards in reading have improved considerably.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school promotes pupils' personal development satisfactorily. The work the school has done to encourage healthy lifestyles is having a positive effect and there is good participation in physical activity. Pupils participate well during assemblies and respond well when lessons are challenging and interesting. They list making friends, school clubs and the opportunities to play outdoors as things that they like about school. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, particularly lower down the school. They respond well when asked to work in pairs and this develops their social skills and ability to work as a member of a team. Most pupils have good regard for their own and other's safety and wellbeing. Pupils willingly help around the school, with play equipment at lunchtime, for example, and as road safety officers. They report that some inappropriate behaviour occurs. Older pupils, for example, do not like the occasions when pupils misbehave in lessons and find this disturbs their learning. Despite the good behaviour of the majority of pupils, this and the instances of unkind behaviour and teasing, rightly concern a significant number of pupils and parents and makes behaviour inadequate overall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Some good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers drew upon a wide variety of teaching strategies to make learning interesting and capture pupils' interest. These include good use of questions, to involve pupils and make them think, effective use of interactive whiteboards and a carefully judged balance of activities. Some weaknesses were also evident. Teachers do not focus sufficiently on what pupils will learn, as opposed to

do, in lessons. Teaching assistants are not always deployed well in lessons in order to make a difference to individual pupils' learning. This is more successful during reading sessions. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning show that work is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs. The school groups pupils by ability for literacy and mathematics. Within these groups, there is a range of ability and potential and pupils are generally given the same work. In a few sets, work is satisfactorily adapted to support pupils of different abilities but this does not happen on a consistent basis across the school. Not all work is marked. When it is marked, it does not routinely give pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. As a result, despite some clear strengths in teaching methods and approaches, teaching and learning are not promoting secure achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is enhanced well by a range of activities during weekly enrichment afternoons and by providing opportunities for all pupils to learn a musical instrument. It does not support pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics sufficiently. It is not monitored by senior leaders to check whether what is being planned for pupils is appropriate, based on the standards they have already reached, or the gaps that need to be filled. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities underachieve in writing and mathematics because work is not adapted well enough for them. A new reading programme was implemented last year and is a successful initiative. This is being monitored carefully and pupils receive good, focused one-to-one help when they need an extra boost. It is too early to establish whether this programme is also having an impact on writing. The school makes satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not being developed strongly enough across the range of subjects. Subjects such as history, geography and science, for example, do not promote these basic skills consistently in all classes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Pupils speak positively about the support they have to encourage good behaviour and confirm there is always someone they can go to if they have a problem. The school recognises that it has a particularly demanding group of pupils within Year 6. Challenging behaviour was dealt with well during the inspection. Playground supervision was adequate and no pupils were seen to be at risk. Nevertheless, the school's policies for racial equality and recording incidents are not consistently followed and there is some way to go before the school's care and guidance leads to satisfactory behaviour in Year 6. The school does not give adequate attention to pupils' academic care and progress. Improved tracking systems mean the school is now in a better position to monitor pupils' progress more regularly and pick up any signs of underachievement at an early stage. Targets are not consistently used to guide pupils' learning. Discussions with pupils show that some are aware of their targets but these are not always written down and they are generally uncertain how they will know when their target is met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The headteacher and senior leadership team promote pupils' personal development satisfactorily. They have not provided clear enough leadership to tackle some persistent weaknesses. A number

of initiatives have been put into place but these have not been sufficiently focused to bring about improvement and have not been monitored and evaluated well enough, to find out whether they are working. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and accuracy. This has been a contributory factor in the school's inadequate progress since the last inspection. Some leaders and subject managers show determination to make a difference and improve standards but many developments are not sufficiently well embedded to have had an impact on achievement. The governing body has had difficulty recruiting governors over recent years. Governors do not ask challenging questions of the school, nor do they hold it to account, particularly in relation to its progress since the last inspection and the effectiveness of its steps to improve achievement.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	4
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?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

17 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Bursledon Junior School, Southampton, SO31 8BZ

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and seeing you in lessons and around the school. We would particularly like to thank the different groups of pupils who met with an inspector during our visit.

We found that you do well in reading and science. Your school has introduced some new ideas to help you improve your reading, and these are going well. You do not make as much progress as you should in writing or mathematics and we have asked the school to work hard on this to help you reach better standards. We were impressed by how many of you followed healthy lifestyles, by exercising and eating the right foods, and we also liked the way you support different charities. Most of you behave well and are friendly to one another. We know that this is not the case with everyone and there are times when lessons in Year 6 are disrupted by poor behaviour. You told us you do not like it when some children make unkind comments to other children which are hurtful. We have asked your headteacher and the senior leadership team to improve behaviour so that all children in your school can learn in a happy atmosphere.

We have also asked the leadership team to look much more closely at what the school does to find out what is working well and what could be improved. Several teachers have special responsibilities for different subjects and we would like them to check how well you are learning and making progress. It will help the school to spot if any of you are slipping back in your writing and mathematics and need extra help. This process is working well in reading. There is a lot to do and we have judged the school requires special measures to help it improve quickly so that you all learn well in all subjects.

With best wishes

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector