

Buckshaw Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119205
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313221
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Brian Dower

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	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Laura Lennox
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Stephens
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	Chancery Road Astley Village Chorley Lancashire PR7 1XP
Telephone number	01257 418862
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Buckshaw is smaller than most primary schools. It serves an area of broadly average social and economic characteristics but there are pockets of deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above that seen nationally and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds but there are a few pupils of minority ethnic heritage and some of these have English as an additional language. Many pupils join or leave the school at times other than the start or end of an academic year.

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. Standards are average and when account is taken of pupils' starting points, achievement is good. The rate of academic progress has improved over the last year, and this has led to a rise in standards in mathematics and science. This good progress is being maintained in pupils' current work. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills and use information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively. Well planned literacy and numeracy lessons help pupils develop basic skills but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in other areas of the curriculum. The majority of parents are appreciative of the level of care and support their children receive.

Pupils are confident and self-reliant with the personal qualities to be successful in life. They enjoy school and feel safe and secure. They say that everyone gets on well together and that rare instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Behaviour is good and pupils know right from wrong. Attendance is average. Pupils take on responsibilities by helping with school routines and the older pupils help to care for the younger children. They are involved with community activities, mainly through charitable events. Pupils' views are channelled through the Pupil Forum, which has been successful in securing more play and learning equipment. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and balance rest with exercise. Pupils' moral and social development is good and they have an excellent understanding of the diversity of British society. Spiritual development is satisfactory.

Progress is good because pupils are keen to learn and take pride in what they do. They work well collaboratively and independently. Teaching is good. Teachers use a wide variety of resources and plan a range of practical learning activities to engage pupils in their learning. Pupils are confident and articulate when speaking about their work because teachers balance challenging questioning with an encouraging and supportive approach. Pupils are well informed about how well they are doing but there are inconsistencies in the feedback they receive on how to improve. They are interested in all their subjects and are enthusiastic about the enrichment activities in lessons and after school. The trips out of school and visiting speakers are particularly popular. The school is looking to develop a thematic approach to curriculum planning to make the links between subjects clearer to pupils.

The care and support afforded to vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are excellent. As a result, they make good progress in their personal development and do well academically. This commitment to equality of opportunity pervades the work of the school. Leadership, management and governance are good. Good procedures are in place to monitor pupils' progress but they are not applied with equal rigour in all subject areas. Nevertheless, the school knows itself well and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision is good. Children start school with skills that are below those usually seen for this age, particularly in their language, number and social development. Children settle quickly because of the school's induction procedures and soon form good relationships with each other and with adults. Lessons are planned to ensure an appropriate balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Very good use is made of the excellent outdoor play area. This area provides exceptionally well for all areas of learning as well as giving children

opportunities for independent and creative activities. Achievement is good overall but some children do not progress as quickly as others in their language development and their understanding of the world around them. A priority in the school's improvement plan is to speed up the rate of that progress. By the time children enter Year 1, most have reached the level expected for their age but language and social skills remain weaker. This is because of the good teaching, the close monitoring of progress and the effectiveness of additional support when weaknesses are identified, and good leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in all subject areas.
- Ensure that the school's good systems for monitoring pupils' progress are applied rigorously across the curriculum.
- Ensure that there is greater consistency in informing pupils how they can improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are average and pupils' achievement is good. From starting school with skills that are below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress to leave school at the expected level. National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science have been average over time. There was a dip in performance in mathematics and science in 2006 but this was addressed and there was an improvement in all three subjects in 2007. The school met its performance targets. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics have also been average over time. The school's assessments, and the quality of the work seen during the inspection, show that such good progress is being maintained and pupils are poised to meet their performance targets for this year. Good progress is being made by all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils who join the school part way through a year settle quickly and their progress soon matches that of others. Pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory and their ability to use ICT is well developed. They have good speaking and listening skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' moral and social development is good. They know right from wrong and are sensitive to each other's needs. Behaviour is good. Those few pupils who have difficulty adjusting to school discipline are managed well and make good progress in their personal development. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the diversity of cultures and faiths. Spiritual development is only satisfactory because there are few planned opportunities for reflection or prayer. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and that rare instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. They have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and well and they eat healthily and take plenty of exercise. Pupils enjoy their work and the extensive extra-curricular activities. The school is doing all it can to improve upon the current average attendance rates. Older pupils undertake a range of responsibilities, including helping with school routines and the care of the younger children. The Pupil Forum representatives are active in representing the views of their peers and have been successful in securing more playground equipment and improvements to the local environment. The extensive charitable

work is testimony to pupils' concern for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are well placed to make the most of the next stage of their education because they are confident and self-reliant.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress because they listen carefully, work hard and concentrate well. They are clear about how well they are doing but there is inconsistency in the quality of guidance they receive on how to get better. Marking does not always focus on points for improvement and opportunities are sometimes missed to get pupils to evaluate for themselves how well they are doing. Very good use is made of ICT to support pupils' independent working. Questioning is used effectively to get pupils to think for themselves and discuss their work, hence their good speaking and listening skills. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher's open-ended questioning encouraged pupils to share their ideas for a fantasy story and they used an extensive range of vocabulary. They were excited by the challenge and learnt a lot of new words. The care and support provided by the teaching assistants and other classroom helpers enable those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a good curriculum. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned but there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in different subjects across the curriculum. A good social, emotional and health education programme provides well for pupils' personal development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities extends pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the work done in lessons. These after-school activities are well attended and pupils speak enthusiastically about the trips out of school and the many visitors who come to speak to them. The work done in 'nurture' groups is matched closely to that done in class so that pupils needing extra support receive the same broad education and are soon integrated back into the classroom. This aspect of the school's provision is excellent.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. The school is particularly effective in meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning and/or emotional difficulties. Problems are identified quickly and pupils are provided with exemplary nurture and support. The school's pupil mentor, the 'nurture' group leaders and the services of a professional counsellor provide exemplary care and support. As a result, pupils receiving this support make good progress in their personal and academic development. There are excellent links with outside agencies to provide further support for these pupils and those who have English as an additional language. Child protection procedures are in place, safety audits are conducted on a regular basis and risk assessments are carried out for all activities, particularly for trips out of school. The school monitors pupils' academic progress well and provides appropriate advice and guidance when weaknesses are uncovered. Performance targets are not being used with equal effectiveness

in all subjects to enable monitoring, advice and guidance to be sharply focused in all curriculum areas.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. School leaders provide strong and effective leadership and they are well supported by an able and hard working staff. Although the falling roll created by demographic changes is creating a degree of uncertainty, staff are committed and morale is high. Inclusion is at the heart of the school's work and every pupil has the support they need to make the most of their education. Governors know the school well and are closely involved in its day-to-day life. They ask the right questions and play their part in forward planning. Self-evaluation is good and appropriate priorities are in place to take the school forward. Although challenging performance targets are in place in most subject areas, the school recognises that more needs to be done to improve the way progress is monitored across every area of the curriculum. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly in the progress pupils have made in mathematics and writing. The school therefore has a good capacity to build on what has already been achieved.

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?	1
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	3
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	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 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?	2

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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

21 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buckshaw Primary School, Chorley, PR7 1XP

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the day we spent with you and only wish we had had more time to see all the interesting things you are doing in your lessons and in the after-school activities. You told us that yours is a good school and we agree with you. Please thank your parents for sending us their views on how well you are doing. Thanks to those of you who gave their time to come and talk to us. We appreciate the contribution you made to the inspection.

The standard of your work is similar to that seen in most primary schools and the progress you make is good. This is because you, your teachers and the assistants work so hard. We saw many instances of you working well together but you also have the ability to work independently and find out things for yourselves. The visitors to your school help you understand the world around you and you spoke enthusiastically about the trips away. Your behaviour is good and you show concern for each other and those less fortunate than yourselves. You told us that everyone gets on well together.

Your school gives you a lot of care and support. There are pupils who sometimes struggle a little but they are given the extra help they need and they make the same progress as everyone else. You older pupils also do a lot to help the younger children, as well as helping staff with general school routines. We know that your teachers are very appreciative of all that you do.

We have asked the school to take some action to make things even better. You have satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills and the school will look at ways for you to use them well in all subjects. Teachers will also ensure you receive more help and guidance on how to improve your work. Staff with responsibilities for subjects will all make thorough checks on the progress you are making in their subjects.

It's not long now to the summer holidays and we hope you all have an enjoyable and well deserved break. We send you our best wishes for the future, particularly those of you who will be going on to secondary school in September.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Lead inspector