

Burpham Foundation Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125299
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315227
Inspection date	25 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Revd Canon Colin Matthews
Headteacher	Mr Paul Goddard
Date of previous school inspection	11 September 2002
School address	Burpham Lane Burpham Guildford GU4 7LZ
Telephone number	01483 572510
Fax number	01483 453271

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues -achievement and standards, personal development and well being, teaching and learning, leadership and management and care, guidance and support - gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, a governor and staff, also contributed to the judgements. 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 this report.

Description of the school

This popular average-sized school serves a relatively prosperous area of mainly privately-owned housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. Less than ten per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school houses a Language Development Centre for ten pupils aged four to seven, all of whom have statements of special educational need. The number of other pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. The school has an award for promoting healthy lifestyles. It has links with other local schools looking at how they might extend their provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has a number of outstanding features including the personal development and well-being of its pupils and the care, guidance and support they receive. It benefits from an excellent language development centre where pupils follow individual education programmes suited exactly to their needs. Pupils enter the school with skills and abilities that are generally above those expected, especially in their personal and social development. Pupils achieve well, but their rate of progress varies between year groups. An investment of additional staffing in Years 5 and 6 boosts pupils' achievement greatly, as they are taught well in smaller ability groups. Standards in English, mathematics and science are high by the end of Year 6, a consistent pattern that has been maintained over several years. Challenging targets for the majority of pupils are usually met. However, targets for higher attaining pupils were pitched too low in 2007 as these were exceeded. Pupils have not made as much progress by the end of Year 2, especially in mathematics where standards are average. Boys, in particular, struggle to gain the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve particularly well because of the outstanding quality of the support they receive.

The headteacher has a clear vision to provide education that is 'committed, caring, challenging and creative', as the school's aim states. He is very ably supported by the new deputy headteacher, who is sharing some of the management responsibilities and enabling the headteacher to focus more on improving the school in the longer term. Middle managers are helping standards to rise, especially in writing and the Foundation Stage, where improvements in the past year have resulted in better achievement. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, with a stimulating range of activities for pupils to enjoy. There are excellent links with outside providers in the arts and sport, and also with those agencies offering advice for more vulnerable pupils. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need developing. They consult pupils, parents, staff and governors in planning for improvement, so that strategic plans are well researched and evaluated. Parents are mostly supportive of the school. Speaking for many, one parent wrote, 'The children really feel involved in the school and are proud to be there.' A few parents said that communication between school and home could be better, when in fact the school does more than most, including sending letters home electronically.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning because of the good teaching and a curriculum that interests them. One pupil commented, 'They make lessons really fun and give us games to warm our brains up.' Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. They love coming to school. Attendance is very high. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding, both in class and around the school. They care for one another, as the older pupils pair up with younger ones in the playground. Pupils know all about living healthy lifestyles and enjoy taking part in a wide variety of sports including squash and tennis. They feel safe and secure in school, and know what to do if they have a problem. Pupils form a valuable part of the wider community through close links with the church and their involvement in arts and sporting festivals. The choir sings to the elderly and the school performs in the local theatre. They leave the school with a very strong set of basic skills and the confidence and independence to succeed at secondary school.

Standards are high because the teaching is usually good or better. Teachers share with pupils exactly what they are going to learn and how they will get there. Lessons are conducted with enthusiasm and at a brisk pace. There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve and

relationships with staff are extremely positive. In a Year 5 writing lesson, pupils were asked to close their eyes and visualise an island setting before highlighting examples of good description from a text. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to assess how well pupils are doing, perhaps through asking questions that elicit only short responses, or in setting work that does not sufficiently challenge them. Teachers use a variety of formats to plan lessons, some more effective than others. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the progress of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The curriculum is adapted well to the needs of all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties or disabilities. It is enriched by a good variety of clubs, visits and visitors. The school offers a wealth of residential experiences for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to develop their independence and try out new activities.

Leaders have developed an outstanding caring ethos that values pupils as individuals and gives them the opportunity to grow and thrive in their studies. Good academic guidance is given to pupils, so that they know how to improve. One parent noted, 'The commitment and enthusiasm of the staff are first rate, which seems to come from the headteacher.' He gives strong yet understated leadership, always eager to encourage other members of staff in building their skills and taking more responsibility. The impact of this approach is seen in the high quality of relationships throughout the school. Governors are involved well in the life of the school, and offer challenge as well as support. They are not afraid to take difficult decisions for the long term, for example in their consideration of the future of the language development centre. The school has improved well since its last inspection and standards are high. It is well-placed to continue to go from strength to strength.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception class offers a good start to children, who settle in very quickly. They make good progress because the curriculum stimulates them and fires their natural curiosity. Good teaching ensures activities are purposeful and linked together skilfully, with the right mixture of adult-led and child-chosen experiences. Effective use is made of the spacious classroom and the attractive outdoor area. The Foundation Stage is led well, with good assessment procedures in place and a strong team of support staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics by the end of Year 2 by providing a range of exciting and stimulating activities that will appeal to more able boys in particular.
- Ensure day-to-day assessment is consistent across the school so that planning challenges and extends the learning of all pupils.

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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?	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	1
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	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1

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

4 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burpham Foundation Primary School, Guildford, GU4 7LZ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. Yours is a good school with a number of particularly special strengths. Here are some of them.

- You reach high standards by the time you leave the school.
- You are extremely well cared for and supported by the staff.
- Your behaviour is excellent, and you look after one another really well.
- You enjoy school so much that you are hardly ever away.
- The teaching is good and lessons are interesting and fun.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and his team.
- The children in the language development centre receive excellent support and make rapid progress in their learning.

Some of the younger pupils do not do so well in mathematics, so I have asked your teachers to think about ways of helping them to improve, especially in giving them exciting things to do that make them really think. The teachers know how well you are doing, but find this out in different ways. I think it would help if they agreed a similar approach, and made sure that the work they give you is just right for you, not too difficult and not too hard. That way you will learn best of all. I know your teachers are keen to hear your views about what helps you to make progress, so that the lessons can be even more exciting.

Thank you once again for your help. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N Butt

Lead Inspector