

Burlish Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135040
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	319599
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Usha Devi HMI

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	450
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	103
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Spencer
Headteacher	Janet Bickerton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Windermere Way Burlish Park Stourport-on-Severn DY13 8LA
Telephone number	01299 823771
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Age group	3–11
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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

In September 2007, Burlish Park Primary School opened on the site of Burlish Park First School. Therefore, there is no previous inspection report. Burlish Park Primary School is a larger than average primary school. The majority of pupils come from White British families with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below the national average, as is the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school has a specialist unit for pupils with speech and language disorders. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is provided for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has been awarded the Healthy School award.

To oversee the appointment of new staff, an interim governing body was established two years prior to the opening of Burlish Park Primary School. The permanent governing body came into effect in December 2007. When Burlish Park First School closed in July 2007, governors appointed half of the teaching staff from this school to teach in the new Burlish Park Primary School. The remaining staff and the current headteacher were appointed from a number of other schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Burlish Park Primary School is a satisfactory school and it has some good features. The good personal development of pupils is a key strength of this caring school. Pupils are well behaved, courteous and considerate towards the adults they work with, each other and visitors. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire say they are pleased with the improvements that have taken place since the school opened in September 2007. They are particularly appreciative of the good level of care their children receive. 'Staff are approachable and understanding' wrote one parent, reflecting the views of many. The small group of learners from the Communication Centre are effectively included into the life of the school.

While the school's collective leadership and management are satisfactory, the leadership of the headteacher is good. Members of the school community describe her as a caring and compassionate leader. The headteacher has worked effectively with staff to create a common sense of purpose. Senior teachers, staff and governors share her determination to further improve the school and ensure all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Subject leaders use a range of strategies to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. However, they have all yet to be effective in ensuring interventions are consistently implemented by staff and leading to good quality teaching and learning. Although the school's self-evaluation is sometimes too generous, it identifies the school's strengths and weaknesses. This evaluation, together with improvements since the school opened and satisfactory leadership and management, provides the school with a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

When children start in the Nursery, their performance levels are broadly similar to those normally expected. They make satisfactory progress in the EYFS. Although achievement is satisfactory, current assessment information shows that there are differences in performance between subjects and year groups in Key Stages 1 and 2. For instance, pupils make good progress in physical education (PE) and science. In many classes, pupils make better progress in reading than writing. The school has recently introduced a number of initiatives to improve the teaching of this subject. However, these have not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on progress and writing standards. By the time pupils leave the school, reading and mathematics standards are in line with the national average. Standards in writing are broadly average by the end of Year 6 and below average in some year groups.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in some classes. Pupils make good progress when teachers set tasks that successfully build on their previous skills and provide a sufficient level of challenge. However, this good practice is inconsistent and leads to uneven rates of progress throughout the school. Too often, assessment information is not used well enough to set tasks that meet the needs of the different learners. In particular, the tasks for the pupils who are higher attaining lack sufficient challenge. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers' marking does not always provide pupils with the guidance they need to improve their work and achieve their learning targets. The satisfactory curriculum has a number of strengths, especially in the provision of PE where the school has achieved many successes, including winning at national level in boys' indoor rowing. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good and pupils say these activities make learning fun. Community cohesion is good, both locally and in the way that the school reaches out to the global community through its links with China and Gambia.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children in the Nursery settle securely into school and they behave well, due to the good attention given to their personal development, care and welfare. Safeguarding procedures are secure, with risk assessments in place and key people identified to support the developmental needs of individual children. As a result, children feel happy and safe. Staff make sure that parents and carers are kept well informed of their children's progress.

When children start in the Nursery, their attainment levels broadly match those expected for their age. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the expected progress in the EYFS because of satisfactory provision. The school has identified that children's performance in language and number are relatively weaker and recently introduced new ways of teaching these aspects. Good opportunities through the 'Forest Schools' initiative effectively encourage children to use their imagination while learning. One child when thinking about the effects of the wind said 'You can see the trees blowing and the clouds moving along' and another said 'The wind is invisible'.

Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to plan a suitable range of activities. However, the activities they plan do not always provide children with sufficient opportunities to explore and discover for themselves. This is because there is sometimes an imbalance between adult led activities and those that children can choose for themselves. Too often, the tasks for the more able do not provide an appropriate level of challenge. The outside areas are well organised with an adequate range of activities. Leadership and management of the EYFS are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure a consistently good rate of progress throughout the school, especially in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better and increase the level of challenge so that more able pupils always achieve as well as they can.
- Iron out inconsistencies in teaching and learning by ensuring all subject leaders fulfil their monitoring and evaluative roles effectively.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement between Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall because of variations in the quality of teaching. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the Communication Centre, achieve as well as other pupils. The school assessment information shows that while pupils make good progress in science and PE, rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics are uneven throughout the school. For example, in some classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make relatively better progress in reading than writing. Standards in reading are average. In comparison, standards in writing are broadly average by the end of Year 6 and lower in some year groups. The school is aware that higher attaining pupils are capable of making faster progress and reaching higher standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their life in school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Relationships are strong and pupils know how to stay safe. Pupils are keen to learn and their behaviour is consistently good in and around the school. Attendance is satisfactory. Through their choices of food and the comprehensive PE curriculum, pupils lead a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a positive contribution through the work of the school council. They helped to deliver improvements to blinds in classrooms and new play equipment for the playground. They have also developed a 'friendship stop' for pupils who may feel sad. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue and the majority of parents confirm that their children feel safe. Pupils develop confidence and social skills through good peer interaction in lessons. Sound skills in literacy and numeracy prepare pupils satisfactorily for adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The majority of teaching is satisfactory and some is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and lead to a good work ethic. Examples of good practice include pupils working at a brisk pace individually, in pairs or groups and teachers asking questions that extend pupils' thinking and speaking skills. Pupils also achieve well when teachers set tasks that are practical and imaginative and encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning. Nevertheless, pupils make satisfactory progress overall because these best features are not yet consistently applied in all lessons. Assessment is not always used well enough to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged to do as well as they can. While teachers' marking celebrates achievements, it does not always give pupils pointers for development. Teaching assistants make a good contribution when they work with individuals or groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory but it does not always meet the full range of learners' needs. As a result, pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good. Teachers are beginning to increase the opportunities pupils have to develop their literacy and mathematical skills through other subjects. The satisfactory curriculum is enriched effectively with a good range of stimulating learning activities. For instance, 'Wicked Wednesday' is a popular innovation with pupils. This gives pupils the opportunity to choose activities such as African drumming and jewellery making. Provision for PE is good and a strength of the school. There are strong links with local athletics and rugby clubs. Effective links with the local secondary school and other agencies enable wider provision for teaching modern foreign languages. A group of older pupils, for example, are learning Russian.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe because they experience a good level of care and are well supported. Indeed, when the school council was asked if it took responsibility for the welfare of other pupils the

reply was, 'No, we all do!' The additional learning needs of pupils, including those in the Communication Centre, are identified early and strong links with external agencies ensure they receive a suitable level of support. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as others. Procedures to promote pupils' welfare and to safeguard them are robust. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school sets individual learning targets for all pupils; however, they are not sufficiently challenging for the higher attaining pupils. Staff do not always provide pupils with the support they need to achieve their targets. As a result, pupils are not fully aware of what they need to do to make faster progress. The school has sound plans in place to involve pupils in the target setting process.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher leads the school well. She has created a positive environment where good teamwork is established and staff morale is high. Although the school's self-evaluation is too positive, the school has a secure understanding of the actions that need to be taken to improve provision. For example, the recent introduction of initiatives to improve pupils' writing is the result of a careful analysis of pupils' performance in different subjects. There are sound systems in place to check the work of the school. However, not all subject leaders monitor and analyse work with sufficient rigour. Consequently, there are variations in the quality of teaching and learning between subjects and year groups. Governors support the school well. They visit regularly and are increasingly holding it to account for its performance.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

3 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Burlish Park Primary School, Stourport-on-Severn, DY13 8LA

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome the inspectors received during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work, visiting your lessons and looking at your work. We would like to say a special thank you to all the children who came to talk to us about the school council and their work. We would also like to thank the children who baked us some biscuits using a recipe from Malawi. The biscuits were delicious.

Burlish Park Primary School is a satisfactory school with some good aspects. School leaders are helping you to make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics and good progress in PE and science. These are some of the things we liked most.

- You have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school. In lessons, you listen carefully and behave very well.
- All the adults who work with you take good care of you and teach you satisfactorily. They are working hard to help you make even better progress.
- You enjoy taking part in the range of activities that are on offer on 'Wicked Wednesday', visiting different places and taking part in the after school clubs.
- Your school council works hard and does a good job to help improve the school, like setting up friendship stops.

We have asked Mrs Bicketon, the staff and governors to help you make even faster progress in reading and mathematics and especially writing. We have also asked the teachers to make sure that those of you who find the work easy are given challenging tasks so that you always do your very best. Finally we have asked all the teachers who manage subjects to make sure that everything is always as good as it can be. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard.

Thank you once again for being so kind, helpful and friendly. We were delighted to meet you and wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi Her Majesty's Inspector