

# Burnley Casterton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119219
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326972
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter McKay

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	270
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev. Ian Watts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maggie Crooks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Thames Avenue Burnley Lancashire BB10 2PZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 435657
<b>Fax number</b>	01282 35657

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average and draws most of its pupils from areas of significant social and economic disadvantage; the proportion eligible for free school meals is well above average. About 70% of pupils are White British, with the remainder largely of Pakistani origin. About a third of pupils do not speak English as a first language. Over 30% of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with a higher proportion recently in some year groups. Inward mobility is well above average.

## 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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement and the standards attained in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate because of persistent underachievement in Key Stage 1. The low standards in reading, writing and mathematics shown by assessment results in the last three years have created a legacy of underachievement, which is now starting to have a negative impact on standards higher up the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are not making sufficient progress in relation to their starting points in Year 1.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below those typical for their age. High quality provision enables them to make good progress in all areas of learning, so that on entry to Year 1 most pupils have reached the levels expected for their age. They do not build well enough on this good start. Results in Year 2 assessments in recent years have been well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. The 2008 results showed some improvement in all subjects but remained well below average overall.

Results in national tests for Year 6 have fluctuated according to the nature of the cohorts. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress from the levels they reached in Year 2, they have not caught up the lost learning from Years 1 and 2. Results in 2007 indicated that most pupils did not achieve as well as they should in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those who are at an early stage of learning English and those from minority ethnic backgrounds made satisfactory progress. Provisional results for 2008 show clear improvement in mathematics but standards remain below average.

Pupils' underachievement results mainly from the variation in the quality of teaching. Although it is satisfactory overall, teaching is not effective enough to ensure that pupils' progress improves rapidly throughout the school. Good practice undoubtedly exists but has not been embedded across the school. Mixed age classes and a high rate of inward mobility pose additional challenges for teachers. Lessons are not always sufficiently well planned to meet the wide ranging needs of all pupils, particularly the more able.

Other aspects of provision are more effective. An increasingly creative curriculum is overriding the boundaries between different subjects. Wider use of information and communication technology (ICT) is providing more fun in lessons and increasing pupils' enjoyment of learning. The highest priority is given to care and welfare so that pupils feel safe and secure. The school is alert to new threats or dangers and during the inspection visiting police officers were warning of the dangers of cyber-bullying. Detailed records of pupils' progress are kept and the use of short-term learning goals to guide improvement is developing.

The school is very successful in promoting good personal development. Pupils enjoy all the school offers. Relationships are good because pupils find adults approachable and always ready to help or listen to their concerns. The work of the school's learning mentor and behaviour support worker helps to ensure that attendance and punctuality are good and improving and that positive attitudes to learning are the norm. Pupils have an excellent knowledge about how to stay healthy and safe. Their future well-being is well supported by their skills in working

cooperatively with other pupils in lessons. They contribute well to the wider school community, for example, as playground buddies or library monitors. Many pupils are generous with their time and effort in raising money for charities such as Jeans for Genes, Comic Relief and Children In Need.

The headteacher is well supported by other staff in ensuring the school runs smoothly as a happy and harmonious community. The school is highly valued in the local area and is strongly endorsed by parents. 'My son loves school and comes home eager to tell me of his day' is a typical comment. Systems and procedures to monitor, evaluate and improve the school's performance are in place, but lack sharpness and rigour. Consequently, senior leaders have been slow to recognise and tackle underachievement. There are some signs that effective, albeit belated, actions are leading to improvement, but these are too recent to be considered secure. Governors are supportive and enable vital links with the local community. They have not shown sufficient independence in challenging the school's areas of underperformance. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve but currently does not provide value for money because pupils do not achieve well enough.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good with outstanding features. Children in the Reception year are taught in two classes, one of which contains a large proportion of children from Year 1. Most children have had nursery experience and start school with skills below national expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy. Overall progress is good. Most children achieve well in reaching the recommended goals by the time they start in Year 1. The provision is well led and managed and children thrive in a stimulating, happy and caring environment. Staff use assessment information well in setting individual targets and there is an effective, ongoing monitoring system to keep a close check on children's progress.

The school takes very good care of the children and very good relationships between adults and children ensure they settle quickly and happily into school. Children learning English as an additional language receive very good support so they achieve well. Teaching is mostly good and is sometimes outstanding. It is most effective when there is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities which are lively and interesting and which are planned to develop children's confidence and independence. In less effective lessons, children are not stimulated by the learning environment and activities are not suitably matched to the children's individual needs.

The curriculum is good and is suitably based on purposeful, practical activities. Strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development enables children to make excellent progress in this area. Good use of the stimulating outdoor area enhances learning throughout the year.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise achievement and standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- Analyse assessment information more thoroughly to identify and take action to eliminate underachievement.
- Plan tasks and activities for lessons which will stimulate and challenge pupils of all abilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Achievement is inadequate and standards are below average. The good progress made in the Reception class and the broadly average levels of development reached are not sustained in Years 1 and 2. Results in national assessments for Year 2 pupils have been well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics for a number of years. Typically, between a third and a half of pupils do not reach the level expected for their age. There was some improvement in 2008, particularly in reading, though overall results remained well below average. Pupils did not perform as well as similar pupils nationally. This underachievement is now beginning to depress pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2. In Years 3 to 6 standards remain below average although these cohorts started in Year 1 in line with expectations. Inspection evidence indicates that the high numbers of pupils joining the school are not a significant factor in this.

Results in Year 6 tests have fluctuated, with no sustained trend of improvement. In 2007 results in English were average but those in mathematics were well below average. Targets were not met. Value added measures showed only minority ethnic pupils, and those receiving support for learning or language difficulties making satisfactory progress in these subjects. Provisional results for 2008 show some improvements, with an increase in the number reaching the expected Level 4 in English. In mathematics there was a significant increase in the numbers reaching both the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Results in science have been consistently average, with all groups of pupils making satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils respect each others' backgrounds, are polite, friendly and work well together. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average and improving. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in achieving a healthy lifestyle. Pupils feel very safe in the caring environment of school and are totally confident that they can approach an adult if they have a problem. They are shortly to celebrate this confidence in themselves and in others by wearing blue for Friendship Day. They make a good contribution to the school community by undertaking responsibilities as school councillors, team captains and buddies. They also contribute well to the wider community by singing for residents in a local retirement home and by raising money for a variety of charities. Pupils respond well to the clear systems of expectations and rewards and their behaviour is good. Pupils' preparation for the future is satisfactory. Their capacity for hard work, good social skills and ability to work collaboratively are offset by weaknesses in literacy and numeracy skills. The school welcomes a range of visitors to school to widen pupils' appreciation of others, for example, by sampling food, music and dance from diverse cultures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory but not consistently good enough to address accumulated past underachievement. Although much teaching has some strengths, currently too many lessons

are pitched at pupils of average ability and lack challenge. As a result, more able pupils often find work is too easy. Assessment is improving, so teachers have a better idea of the levels pupils are working at to help them in planning lessons with stimulus and challenge for all pupils. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information to plan tasks and activities closely matched to the needs of all pupils. Most lessons feature clear explanations, based on good subject knowledge and often enhanced by use of the interactive whiteboard. The use of cross curricular links to allow pupils to develop and apply learning in different contexts is developing. The use of talk partners is helping to improve speaking and listening skills. Teachers set clear expectations for behaviour and good relationships ensure an atmosphere conducive to learning. Well trained and briefed support staff give the right amount of help, well targeted at those most in need. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to think and act for themselves or to be involved in taking decisions and assessing their own progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The broad and balanced curriculum is accessible to all pupils. The well established programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHE) makes a strong contribution to pupils' good personal development, promoting confidence and self-esteem. Appropriate time is allotted to developing literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers link subjects together to make learning more interesting; for example, pupils in Year 6 develop their dictionary skills whilst researching new science vocabulary. Good resources for information and communication technology (ICT) are used well to support learning in other subjects, which is an improvement from the last inspection. French has been introduced across the school. The curriculum is enhanced by the good range of clubs and competitive sports available after school, which are well attended. Many visits are arranged to support learning in different subjects, which increases pupils' enjoyment of school. This includes a residential trip to promote independence and team spirit in older pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall and some aspects of the provision are outstanding. The school takes very good care of its pupils who are adamant that they feel very safe and secure. This is supplemented by the good provision in the breakfast and after school clubs. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and rigorously applied. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those at an early stage of learning English enables them to achieve as well as and often better than other pupils. The excellent programme of support for pupils with emotional or behaviour difficulties is very effective in promoting positive attitudes to school and improving attendance. There are good systems for tracking pupils' progress and target setting but they are not used well enough to guide improvement. More effective is the use of shorter term learning goals, well liked and understood by pupils, but yet to have an impact on standards, particularly in Key Stage 1.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Clear leadership and a sense of purpose successfully promote pupils' good personal development and effective community cohesion. The school's leadership has been less effective in raising achievement and standards. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and undertaken by staff at all levels. Good systems for tracking individual pupils' progress have been introduced and these are steering developments soundly. However, senior leaders did not act quickly enough in the past to identify and deal with underachievement because they did not make sufficient use of assessment data. Nonetheless, some good strategies to raise standards have now been put in place and the impact of these indicates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. There are some signs of recovery in improved results for Years 2 and 6, though the impact of past underachievement is still evident in pupils' standards. New approaches have been established to enable more effective analysis and use of data to improve pupils' learning. Progress has been made in improving reading and expanding the use of ICT, which were issues raised at the last inspection.



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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?	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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	4
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?	Yes

**Annex B**

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

21 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnley Casterton Primary School, Lancashire, BB10 2PZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit and hearing about how much you enjoy school. Thank you very much for being so friendly and helpful.

There are many things we like about your school. We agree with you and your parents in thinking that the school is a very friendly and caring community. You behave well in lessons and around the school. We like the way the way you help others both in and out of school, particularly through your fundraising for charity. The school works hard to help you become responsible and confident young people and we were very impressed with how keen you are to be involved in so many different activities in and out of school.

We think that you make good progress in the Reception year, but that recent test results show that the school has not helped you to carry on and do as well as you can in Years 1 and 2. This means that as you move up the school you are not achieving the standards you are capable of in English and mathematics. We think the school can help you do better by using all the information it has about you to set you work at the right level but which will also really stretch you. We would also like the school to keep a very close watch on your progress to check that you are not falling behind.

Because there is room for improvement at Key Stage 1, we have given the school a Notice to Improve. This means that the school will receive extra support to improve and there will be a visit from another inspector next year.

Thank you once again for being so polite and helpful. I wish every one of you well for the future and hope that you will always work hard and enjoy school.

Peter McKay

Lead inspector