

Burnley Ightenhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119264
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	326983
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	286
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Terence Mullrooney
Headteacher	Mrs Myra Macklin
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Alder Street Burnley Lancashire BB12 6ED
Telephone number	01282 428246
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all of the pupils at this larger than average sized school are from White British family backgrounds. The school is located in a socially and economically disadvantaged area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils who join the school partway through their primary education is higher than that typically found, and is increasing. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well above average. This is because there is a Special Educational Resource Facility (SERF), which caters for pupils with specific speech and language needs on site. A designated Children's Centre opened during the inspection. The school makes provision in its Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for Reception-aged children. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes in leadership. The present headteacher was appointed in September 2006. The school has recently been accredited with the Artsmark Gold, Activemark, Learning Excellence, Eco School Bronze and Healthy Schools Awards.

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 an accurate view of its effectiveness and provides good value for money. From below average starting points, pupils achieve well and reach average standards by the end of Year 6. They also make good progress in their personal development. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when achievement in these aspects was satisfactory. In the last two years, pupils' academic progress has accelerated. School data and inspection evidence show that standards are now rising. This improving picture is the result of rigorous and determined efforts by leaders to raise standards right across the school. They now set more challenging learning targets, keep a much closer eye on pupils' progress towards them, and ensure that teaching and learning are effective.

Making sure that pupils enjoy learning, feel safe and happy and play an active part in their community is a high priority. From a young age, children develop a keen sense of respect for adults, for one another and for people from differing cultural backgrounds within the locality. Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes reflect their enjoyment of all that is on offer, and the caring and supportive environment within which they learn. Pupils' excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy reflects in their eagerness to participate in sporting activities and to prepare their minds for learning, through activities such as 'peer massage'. These good personal qualities, along with the good progress they make academically, prepare them well to become confident young adults of tomorrow.

Good teaching and learning ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is rapid because of particularly strong teaching and learning. In these classes, teachers consistently provide opportunities for pupils to engage actively, to work independently and to feel continually challenged. These pupils are well aware of their next learning steps because they regularly discuss them with adults. Also, it is in these year groups where efforts to adapt the curriculum, such as teaching pupils of similar ability together in English and mathematics, and providing more creative learning opportunities, have focused. The school is well aware that extending these initiatives fully through Years 1 to 4, so that pupils' progress accelerates even further, is a priority. Pupils' progress, overall, remains faster in reading and writing than in mathematics. This is because of a lack of opportunities for pupils to build on the basic problem-solving skills they learned in the EYFS.

Parents agree the appointment of the headteacher has been a key factor in bringing about sustainable change. In partnership with staff, governors, parents, and pupils, and through effective links with others beyond the school, the headteacher has put the school on a clear pathway of improvement. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. Many express their appreciation, acknowledge the 'vast' recent improvements and say that 'their children's contentment and progress reflect the total commitment and dedication of all the staff'. The new senior leadership team, along with governors, offer effective support. This, along with the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm of everyone, has helped the school to become effective in all aspects of its work. Efforts are now paying dividends, as seen in rising standards. The school's tight focus on continuing this improving trend demonstrates good capacity to continue to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children join the Reception classes, their skills are below what is typical for their age. The warm and caring relationships with adults and amongst children, along with the bright, lively learning environment, ensure that children develop a thirst for learning and settle quickly into school life. Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly strong. Adults make the most of opportunities to help children to learn to get along well together, to grow in confidence and behave well. Teachers and support staff work together closely to assess children's progress. They record children's achievements carefully and plan their future learning based on this knowledge. Consequently, learning builds effectively on what children can already do. Children make good progress and, by the time they start Year 1, many reach the learning goals set nationally. Recent curriculum changes, such as the provision for learning outdoors and the focus on promoting progress in numeracy, reflect the good leadership and management. The proportion of children reaching the goals expected for their age is now rising. Staff are well aware that the priority now is to develop closer links with Year 1, so that children's learning, particularly in numeracy, builds well on their successful start.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to practise solving mathematical problems, so that progress in mathematics accelerates.
- Implement plans to extend the initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning and at adapting the curriculum through Years 1 to 4.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. Accelerating pupils' academic progress is a key school priority and, in the last two years, there has been good improvement. Although the school's evidence and the 2008 unvalidated Year 2 assessments and Year 6 national test results indicate that standards are similar to those reported in recent years, pupils' progress has accelerated, especially in Years 5 and 6. When taking account of the high, and increasing, proportion of pupils who joined the school partway through their primary education with low levels of attainment, along with the large proportion of pupils with additional social and emotional difficulties, pupils have done well to maintain average performance. Challenging learning targets are now set and teachers keep a very close eye on progress towards reaching them. These changes to practice have contributed to an improving picture of achievement. There are now significantly more pupils exceeding the expected rate of progress than in previous years. Progress in mathematics is accelerating, albeit at a steadier rate than in reading and writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are helping to accelerate progress and raise standards. Pupils learn in a purposeful and harmonious atmosphere. They are polite and courteous. Their kindness, respectful attitudes and good behaviour ensure that they feel safe and happy. Pupils feel proud of their achievements, no matter how small, because they are valued highly and celebrated often. Pupils

speaking extremely knowledgeably about how to keep healthy. They understand the importance of eating sensibly, participate eagerly in a wonderful range of physical activities and, even the youngest children, understand that having a healthy mind helps them learn. Pupils contribute positively towards their school and local community. They take on responsibilities such as being 'special friends and school councillors' with enthusiasm. Local partnerships, such as the 'Building Bridges Project', enrich pupils' understanding of their ethnically diverse local community. These personal qualities, along with good academic progress, prepare them well to succeed at secondary school. Although pupils attend regularly, attendance is average because a high proportion of holidays are taken during term time, reflecting local holiday patterns.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Hard working and committed teachers have responded with enthusiasm to changes to practice aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, good teaching and learning now enable pupils to achieve well. Positive relationships, sharing of lesson objectives with pupils, the adept use of computerised teaching boards and the thoughtful deployment of classroom assistants, all make a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement. Teachers check regularly what pupils already know and can do. Most use this information effectively to plan pupils' next learning steps and provide work that reflects their varying learning needs. There are also examples of outstanding teaching and learning, resulting in rapid progress, notably in Years 5 and 6. In these years, teachers have very high expectations; provide ample opportunities for pupils to engage actively, to work independently, discuss their progress, and to feel continually challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum enables pupils to achieve well. Strong provision for music, sport, and French, along with good enrichment, through clubs, trips and visitors, all contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. Careful curriculum adjustments are accelerating progress and raising standards. The grouping of pupils in Years 5 and 6 according to their abilities in English and mathematics, for example, is helping to secure a tighter match of work to pupils' varying learning needs and accelerate their progress. In writing, pupils now have more opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects, and from a younger age. There are fewer opportunities, however, beyond the EYFS, for pupils to practise solving problems. This is why pupils' achievement in mathematics is not as marked as it is in reading and writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from an extended range of additional support programmes and, as a result, make good progress. Pupils attending the SERF achieve well as a result of a good balance of opportunities to learn both within the unit and alongside other peers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Making sure that pupils are nurtured and well cared for is at heart of the school. This is seen in the warmth that radiates from staff, and the way in which pupils are continually encouraged to do their best. Pupils are confident that there is always someone on hand to offer support and say they feel safe. Appropriate procedures for

safeguarding pupils are in place. The recent appointment of a family support worker and the opening of the Children's Centre reflects the school's strong commitment to supporting vulnerable pupils, such as those with additional social and emotional needs, and to establishing effective partnerships with parents and the community. Academic guidance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Keeping a closer eye on pupils' progress is helping to ensure that staff quickly spot peaks and troughs in pupils' learning. Increasing pupils' understanding of how to improve, including through marking of their work, also contributes to raising standards. These approaches, however, are not yet applied equally effectively across all classes, particularly in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since the previous inspection, much has been achieved. Improvements to the accommodation, the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum adaptations and the strengthening of pupils' personal development are all contributing to the school's success. These achievements reflect good leadership, management and governance. At the heart of this is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. Greater stability is helping to secure sustainable change. Her clear direction and vision for transforming the school has created a renewed energy amongst everyone. Staff and governors share her vision and strive to meet it with equal determination. Careful analysis of the school's performance by leaders pinpoints improvement priorities swiftly and precisely. As a result, pupils' achievement is boosted where there is most urgent need. Actions are well planned and swiftly implemented. Everyone is working together effectively in order to maintain the momentum of change. The new senior leadership team already have a good understanding of how to review the school's performance. They are keen to improve performance further. They know that their next steps are to make an even greater contribution to monitoring the impact and consistency of initiatives.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

8 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnley Ightenhill Primary School, Lancashire, BB12 6ED

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave inspectors when we visited your school. You answered our questions very thoughtfully. You were polite, your behaviour was good and it was pleasing to hear that you feel safe and happy at school. I particularly enjoyed joining in your assembly and seeing just how proud you are of the many rewards you get when you have done something well. All the adults care a good deal and you are also extremely kind and caring towards one another. I was especially impressed with just how much you know about how to keep yourselves healthy. Not only do you get more chances to take part in physical activities than in many schools, but also you learn, from a very young age, how to make sure that your brain is ready for learning. It is clear how much you enjoy making your school a happier, safer and healthier place to learn, and that you know a lot about other children around the world, as well as and those in other schools nearby.

Lots of your parents told me that they are really pleased with your school. They can see that many things have improved recently. I agree with them. These changes mean that your school is now a good school. Although the standards you reach by the time you leave Year 6 are similar to those typically found, the rate at which you are learning is quicker, and it is still speeding up. This, along with your good behaviour and attitudes to learning, are some of the reasons why you are set to make a good start at secondary school.

Your headteacher, staff and governors work very hard together to help you to reach higher standards. There are some things that can be even better still. I have asked your school to help you further by making sure that:

you learn as quickly in mathematics as you are doing in reading and writing

pupils in Years 1 to 4 learn at the same rate as in Years 5 and 6.

You can help your school by making sure that you know how well you are getting on, and by always checking what you still have to do to reach your learning targets. Of course, you should continue to try your best in everything that you do.

I wish you all the very best for a very successful future.

Kathryn Dodd

Lead inspector