

Burbage Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119964
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327164
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Mary-Jane Edwards

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Worton
Headteacher	Richard Harris
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
School address	Grove Road Burbage Hinckley LE10 2AD
Telephone number	01455 630970
Fax number	01455 630979

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2008
Inspection number	327164

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Burbage is larger than most junior schools. Most pupils come from the large village of Burbage, although a number travel to the school from a wider area. Most pupils are of White British origin, with a small number from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils that have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. The number of pupils who leave or enter the school other than at the normal time is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Burbage Junior School provides a good education for its pupils and, as a result, they achieve well. By the time pupils leave the school, they reach standards that are above average. The school has been working hard to raise standards further among able groups of pupils and there have been recent signs of improvement, particularly in mathematics. The school is led well by the headteacher, whose passion fosters enthusiasm and commitment among staff and pupils alike. One parent described the head as 'motivated, caring and an excellent role model for the school'. Under his leadership, the school promotes a strong, caring ethos, which generates and values a high level of responsibility from pupils in and around school. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and are eager to take part in all that is on offer.

The good quality of pastoral care helps pupils to feel they are valued members of the community and to develop good relationships with staff. This is one of the main reasons why a very large majority of parents are pleased with the school. Because pupils are self-motivated, cared for and supported very well, their personal development is outstanding. This is demonstrated in their maturity and respect for one another, and their excellent behaviour during lessons and at play. All ages work and play extremely well together, with older pupils willingly mixing with and guiding younger ones. Pupils feel safe because they have the confidence to ask for help if they need it and they know that adults will deal with any problems fairly. Pupils know that their views are valued highly and they have regular influence on how the school is organised, for example through the school and class councils. The school has forged close links with the local community and neighbouring groups of schools and, through these links, encourages pupils to act as good young citizens.

Good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve well. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good; they are ably supported by well-trained teaching assistants. The significant amount of good teaching engages pupils who concentrate well and are eager to contribute their own ideas. Teachers use assessments carefully to plan work which meets the needs of groups of pupils. This is most effective for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, in a minority of lessons, planned tasks for able pupils do not make it clear how they might extend their knowledge or understanding. This makes it hard for teachers or pupils themselves to assess their progress. A good curriculum offers a range of opportunities which broaden pupils' life experiences and contribute significantly to their enjoyment of school.

The school is led and managed well. Staff and governors demonstrate a good capacity to improve through their clear understanding of what the school does well and how it can improve further. Their actions to raise standards have focused on the right priorities and are beginning to bear fruit, but senior leaders recognise there is more to do, in particular in the use of monitoring to pinpoint how and where improvements are resulting from their actions.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make learning intentions in lesson planning more precise for potentially more able pupils, so that work is suitably challenging for all and teachers can make more accurate assessments of pupils' progress.
- Set specific and measurable targets in the school's development plan, linked to improved outcomes for pupils, and ensure that monitoring is tightly focused so that rates of pupils' progress can be clearly checked.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the national assessments have remained above the national average in English, mathematics and science for the last five years. Indicators are that this situation has been maintained in 2008. Pupils are currently achieving well across the school. Whilst progress is good overall and standards for more able pupils improved at the end of Year 6 in mathematics, the school recognises there is more to do. The school's own tracking system has identified groups of pupils whose achievement could be improved. However, this information is not yet fed into precise planning by teachers to meet these pupils' needs in order that they can achieve challenging targets. Where pupils are fully involved in setting and reviewing their own targets, they make particularly good progress; however, this approach is not yet consistently used across all classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are supported well by being given carefully planned work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school, concentrate hard in lessons and are proud of their achievements. Attendance rates are above average. Pupils are quick to say how much they value their teachers and speak of them as 'kind and extremely helpful'. They have a thorough understanding of the need to live healthy lives and speak highly of the nutritious food served at lunchtimes. They feel safe at school because bullying is rare and adults are always there to help them. Pupils develop a strong sense of wonder as they take part in activities such as planting vegetables in their excellent garden, watching them grow and recycling the waste to make compost. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and behave impeccably, both in class and around the school. Pupils feel well prepared for the future because of their competence in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) and their well-developed sense of teamwork. They take responsibility very well, and the school and eco-councils are very good ways in which elected pupils contribute towards the improvement of their community. They enjoy many opportunities to take part in local events, and their successes in local sporting competitions can be measured by the school's bulging trophy cabinet.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching is enabling good learning and improving progress, particularly in mathematics. Lessons are typically a hive of activity, with good use of ICT that engages pupils' attention and sustains a good work ethic. Good use is made of 'talking partners' to share ideas. Occasionally, there are times when teachers do not question rigorously enough to encourage more able pupils to extend their thinking. Marking is positively encouraging but is not always used well to support pupils' next steps in learning. Some teachers use a 'traffic light' system to enable pupils to review how challenging they feel a task has been but this good practice is not widely shared. The support of teaching assistants has a positive impact on assisting group work, particularly in their support of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Sometimes their role in both opening and closing parts of lessons is too passive and this is a missed opportunity to

help move learning forward or to support teachers' ongoing assessments of how well pupils of different attainment levels are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and careful planning ensures that it is adapted well to meeting pupils' needs and local circumstances. However, occasionally lesson planning is too 'broadbrush' and does not set out precisely enough the gains that different groups of pupils are expected to make. This restricts the opportunities for a rigorous assessment of learning and evaluation of progress. Strong emphasis is placed on pupils' personal, social and health education and this is assisting pupils to grow in maturity, and is particularly effective in promoting their exemplary behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enable them to build key skills, confidence and enthusiasm. The provision made for gifted and talented pupils is at a very early stage of development and is rightly a priority in the main school improvement plan. The school has firm links with local schools and with a range of organisations who visit to share their experiences with pupils. Art, music and sports clubs are very well attended, with the school's provision resulting in significant enrichment to pupils' curricular experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The sensitivity of all adults ensures that pupils feel safe and well cared for, are happy in school and enjoy learning. Very good pastoral care ensures a warm and secure environment and supports pupils' highly positive attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour. All staff are trained in child protection matters and keep a watchful eye on pupils throughout the day. A minor health and safety issue was brought to the school's attention during the inspection and was responded to immediately. The school harnesses the support of a range of outside agencies and taps into their expertise to improve the progress and well-being of the most vulnerable pupils. Academic guidance is often very good but inconsistencies in practice mean that not all pupils receive the same level of regular good advice on how they can improve their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 tend to have a better grasp of the value of learning targets than younger ones. The school is alert to the steps required for making the assessment and target setting systems even more effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Parents, staff, governors and pupils comment most appreciatively on the strong leadership of the headteacher. With the able support of his deputy, he provides the school with a clear sense of direction and fosters a strong team spirit among staff and governors. Under his direction, staff are focused well on raising standards and ensuring that all pupils make good progress. Teachers and subject leaders, for example in mathematics, are developing their self-evaluation and monitoring skills well and governors are active, questioning and knowledgeable. The main school improvement plan gives a useful summary of current priorities. However, the measures for judging the success of initiatives and the approaches to monitoring are not always focused precisely enough on the intended outcomes for pupils. Good partnerships have been established with parents and with schools and other organisations locally. This has been effective in

supporting pupils' learning and promoting community cohesion. The school has been particularly effective in ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils to participate in the curriculum and has gone a good way to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups as a result.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	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**

17 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burbage Junior School, Hinckley, LE10 2AD

Many of you will remember that we visited your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly, welcoming and polite. This letter tells you what we found out about your school. We have judged that yours is a good school and you told us that you think so too.

What your school does well

- You learn well, make good progress and reach standards that are higher than those found in other schools. You are learning well because teaching is good and there is a good range of interesting activities planned for you in lessons.
- You enjoy school and get on with each other really well. Your behaviour is excellent and you are always ready to help others.
- The staff take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy at school.
- You have a very good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle by following a healthy diet and taking regular exercise.
- Your headteacher and all adults have a very clear idea of what they want to do to make your school even better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Assess your work very carefully so that you are always given challenging work and are really clear when you have done it well. This is important for all of you, but particularly for those of you who find your work quite easy.
- Keep an eye on the progress you are all making by visiting your classes and looking at your work.

It was a pleasure finding out about your school. Keep enjoying all it has to offer you!

Best wishes

Mrs Mary-Jane Edwards Lead inspector