

Burnwood Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124221
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	328083
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	354
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	Sandra Smith
Headteacher	Diane Herbert
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chell Heath Road Chell Heath Tunstall Stoke-on-Trent ST6 7LP

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2009
Inspection number	328083

Telephone number
Fax number

01782 235577
01782 235578

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a below average proportion of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. A high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of these relate to pupils' emotional or social needs or their language development. More than half of the pupils are entitled to claim free school meals compared with a national average of around one in six.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is located in two Reception classes which children enter full time at the beginning of the school year in which they become five-years old. The school has gained the Activemark for physical education and exercise and a Healthy Schools Award. The school has Investors in People status, the Boxall Award and an Artsmark Gold Award. The school is a Forest School and has received other awards for environmental work, such as Green Flag and Woodlands Trust Gold Award. There is extended provision, including an independently run pre-school playgroup on the school site which was inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders place stronger emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development than on their academic development. Consequently, pupils' personal development and well-being are good and their achievement and progress are satisfactory. Since September 2008, the school, working in close partnership with the local authority, has begun some useful work to improve the quality of provision and pupils' achievement. Standards are beginning to rise. Improved teaching of reading and writing is beginning to raise standards in English throughout the school. Recently introduced more effective systems for monitoring and evaluation mean that the school now has a clear and accurate view of where improvements are needed and the school's improvement plan concentrates on developing the correct issues. The school is therefore in a satisfactory position to continue to improve in the future.

Although pupils' achievement is satisfactory, many pupils attain below average standards by the end of Year 6. The school's satisfactory curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, but this is not always the case for the most able pupils. Few pupils exceed standards expected for their ages in writing and mathematics and more able pupils are given insufficient additional guidance and support. Although the school sets challenging targets for the proportion of pupils who should attain average levels, targets for how many pupils should attain higher levels are insufficiently demanding. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties make satisfactory progress because teachers make careful assessments and teaching assistants often provide sound additional support.

The school has introduced much better ways of monitoring the progress of pupils, and the information provided is carefully used to allocate additional support to those who are at risk of falling behind. All subjects have designated leaders but not all take a sufficiently effective role in evaluating and taking action to improve pupils' achievement and progress. The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school, especially of the excellent pastoral care provided. As one wrote, 'This is a very caring school that looks to support not just the child but the whole family.' Pupils say that this is a happy school and they enjoy their time in it. Strong links are maintained with a wide range of agencies and services to support the well-being of pupils, particularly those considered to be potentially vulnerable.

The care, guidance and support and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. All staff form very good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour well. Pupils concentrate and behave well, work hard and often enjoy the interesting lessons provided. Many pupils show consideration for others' safety and feelings and older pupils are pleased to take additional responsibilities within school. They are friendly, polite and helpful. The school has recently reviewed the way in which pupils are provided with individual learning targets in mathematics and writing. These have not yet been effectively introduced in all classes, however, and many pupils are insufficiently aware of what they have achieved to date and where they need to concentrate on improving their work further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Many children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are much lower than those typical of children of their age, especially their language and communications skills.

Induction procedures have improved this year and pupils soon settle in. They make satisfactory progress, but by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage children are still attaining well below expected standards. Daily teaching of letters and sounds is helping children making improved progress in their reading. All staff place appropriately strong emphasis on caring for pupils and they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children are confident at school, well motivated and enjoy learning and playing with others. Staff provide a good range of activities, not only in classrooms but also in the attractive outdoor learning and play areas. Although access to the outdoor area is not easy for one class, the school has a good plan to address this. Staff observations of children's learning lack detail and are not sufficiently used to identify individual needs and the next stage of learning. Therefore, planning is sometimes not fully adapted to match the learning needs of individuals. Reception runs smoothly day to day but some inconsistencies in provision in the two classes have not been challenged to ensure that children in both classes have been prepared for Year 1 in a consistent fashion.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that leaders at all levels focus on monitoring and improving the achievement and progress of pupils so that more pupils attain in line with standards expected of their ages, especially in writing and mathematics.
- In order to increase the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels, especially in mathematics and writing, set more demanding targets and provide greater challenge, guidance and support for more able pupils.
- Ensure that pupils in all classes have a clear understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of their work.

A small proportion of the 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

Last summer's national assessment results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils indicate that pupils attain below average standards. Recent school records and pupils' work indicate that rates of progress are improving, especially in Years 1 and 2. Standards in reading are rising throughout the school due to effective daily teaching of letters and sounds and a well-organised home reading programme. Older pupils are making better progress in reading due to the work the school is doing to motivate pupils to read and pupils are proud to be identified as 'reading angels' or 'reading champions'. Although the achievement of most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, too few pupils attain above the standards expected for their ages and some more able pupils do not achieve their full potential. Due to improved teaching of writing, standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are rising, but standards by Year 6 remain below average in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given support necessary to ensure that they make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour is good and relationships are harmonious. Pupils feel safe in school and act with a sensitive regard for the safety of others. They say bullying is rare and that adults deal with

inappropriate behaviour quickly and fairly. Work related to gaining Healthy School status gives pupils a good understanding of the need for safety, exercise and healthy eating. Pupils contribute well to school and local communities. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example helping younger children, and acting as playground leaders or eco council members. Raising money for charities gives pupils an understanding of wider social and economic issues and those less fortunate. As one pupil said, 'It's important to know there are always others not as lucky as us.' While pupils make good gains in their moral and social development, their spiritual development and their understanding of other cultures and ways of life in a multicultural British society are satisfactory. Because pupils make sound progress in basic skills they are satisfactorily prepared for their next school and the world of work beyond. As a result of measures put in place by the school, attendance is improving. However, rates of attendance are below national averages because too many parents take children on holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Staff manage pupils well, resulting in good behaviour and relationships. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and sometimes provides too little challenge or guidance to pupils on where and how they should improve their work. Teachers' planning is thorough and indicates exactly what learning is intended. However, pupils are sometimes unclear about how to assess their work. Chances are sometimes missed, especially at the end of lessons, to analyse work and help pupils see where they have made mistakes or where they should concentrate in the future. Teaching assistants often provide good guidance to individual or small groups of pupils. Sometimes, however, when the teacher is talking to the whole class, teaching assistants are not deployed fully or effectively. All staff confidently use interactive whiteboards and other information technology equipment to enhance their teaching and pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is enhanced by an impressive range of out-of-class activities and a good number of visits and visitors including residential trips. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy their Spanish lessons. Although a clear focus is placed on teaching basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop these skills in other subjects. The school has improved the range of additional literacy and numeracy support programmes and these are helping improve the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those at risk of underachieving. Although the curriculum mostly meets the needs of learners, tasks do not consistently provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils. Pupils enjoy lessons and find them interesting. 'It's fun to learn new things', they stated. They particularly enjoy learning about environmental issues and working outside in the Forest School. The school's well-developed and comprehensive pastoral curriculum enhances pupils' personal, social and emotional development. However, there is limited additional provision for pupils identified as potentially gifted and talented and insufficient provision to help pupils develop understanding and experience of minority cultures in Britain.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school looks after its pupils exceptionally well. Pupils are confident that adults will respond quickly to problems. One pupil stated, 'The teachers are always there for us.' Child protection and other arrangements to safeguard pupils, such as risk assessments, vetting of staff and safe use of the internet, fully meet statutory requirements. The many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given effective personal support that results in them enjoying school and participating fully. Effective induction procedures help pupils settle into school whenever they start, and the utmost care is taken to ensure the smooth transition to their next stage of education. The nurture group provides high quality support for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. A well-attended breakfast club and healthy eating 'Eco Café' are further ways in which the school supports the needs of pupils. The school has introduced targets to guide pupils' learning in writing and mathematics. This is not yet consistent or having the intended impact on pupils' learning in all classes. Pupils are often unclear about where or how to improve particular aspects of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has introduced a very effective means of monitoring the progress of pupils. Senior managers meet with teachers to analyse the progress of each individual and extra support is allocated to those at risk of underachieving. This is helping raise standards. Although monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory, leaders are not making enough checks to see that important aspects of provision are effective in all classes or challenging inconsistencies when they arise. This results in inconsistencies between classes: for example, in the way that pupils' work is marked or how targets are set. Governors provide good support to the school and are closely involved. They recognise that further training is needed in analysing data in order to help them compare the performance of the school with similar schools nationally. The school has a clear understanding of the nature of its community and makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion, but a thorough review of this aspect of its work has yet to be undertaken.

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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	Yes
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	3
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?	3
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**

13 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnwood Community Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 7LP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We send special thanks to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime to talk with us. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn.

Burnwood is a satisfactory school. It is properly run and gives you a sound education and preparation for life in your next school and in the wider community. Adults provide satisfactory teaching so that you make sound progress. I am pleased that you enjoy school so much and that you and most of your parents are pleased with it.

Although many of you attend regularly some of you miss lessons when you are on holiday in term time. You have a clear understanding of how to act safely and act with care for others' safety. Many of you have limited knowledge or understanding of other ways of life in our country. You understand what is right and what is wrong and show consideration for others. Your behaviour and manners are good. Those of you who find learning difficult make satisfactory progress because the school helps you learn.

There are many things that your headteacher, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better. We agree with them that there are three important things to be done first. These are to:

- help more of you reach the standards expected of your ages, especially in writing and mathematics
- help those of you who find learning a little easier do even better in your work
- help make sure that all of you can see where and how to improve particular aspects of your work.

You can help by checking your own work and telling your teachers when you have found your work to be too easy or too difficult.

I send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Roger Sadler

Lead inspector