

Burnham Copse Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131516
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	315818
Inspection dates	7-8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Grove

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

Type of School	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Penny Waterfield
Headteacher	Ms Lyn Downes
Date of previous school inspection	
School address	New Church Road Tadley RG26 4HN
Telephone number	0118 9814498
Fax number	0118 9813793

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school is situated in a town in north Hampshire. It was formed in January 2007 from the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools on the site, and a new headteacher was appointed. The junior school had been placed in special measures in June 2006. The new school is temporarily housed on the infant site, while the junior premises are re-built, with opening scheduled for September 2008. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, principally speech, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is slightly below average. Some families are of traveller origin. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Burnham Copse Primary is a satisfactory school. In a short space of time, the school's leadership and the staff have created a very positive ethos. This has resulted in an inclusive and inviting atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Pupils' relationships with the teaching and support staff are good. Staff offer good pastoral care and guidance for pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy school life. In lessons, in assemblies and in the playground, behaviour is good. Parents overwhelmingly agree with this. Attendance is average, with minimal unauthorised absence. Good relationships and enjoyment are significant strengths, and important factors in pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One parent spoke for many when she wrote that 'This is a truly happy school.'

Pupils' progress and their achievement are satisfactory. Children enter the school from a variety of backgrounds with a diverse range of experience. Their knowledge and skills are broadly those expected for their age. In the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress so that their attainment is in line with expectations for their age when they start in Year 1.

Results in national tests in 2007 at Key Stages 1 and 2 represented less than two terms of learning in the new school. Results were below average at Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, but were average in writing because of teachers' greater confidence in teaching this subject. At Key Stage 2, results were also below average, and were particularly low in English and science. In almost all subjects at both key stages, boys' performance was lower than that of girls. These results represented achievement that had been too slow over the last few years, but pupils are now making better progress. The school has recognised that the weaknesses in boys' performance are due to aspects of provision that fail to interest them. It is responding through improvements to teaching and to the curriculum.

Pupils' improved progress results from teaching that is consistently satisfactory, and sometimes good. Better teaching is characterised by well-planned lessons where there is a judicious match of tasks to pupils' needs. In such lessons, teachers make efficient use of time and thus help to ensure good progress because learners work productively. However, these good qualities are not consistent in all lessons. A good, new curriculum, including effective use of computers, has been developed. Academic support and guidance is also good through detailed target-setting arrangements, and regular assessment of pupils' progress on a half-termly basis.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. Leaders and governors are clear about the school's values and their vision for future development. The new headteacher has set a clear direction, and is well supported by the assistant headteachers, who together form a cohesive team. The team is aware of present inconsistencies in teaching, and has taken action to improve the quality. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school has an accurate view of present strengths and weaknesses, so that there is a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements. A good partnership has been developed with parents, who are appreciative of what is being achieved at the new school. Links with other organisations are satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory, and children's attainment meets expectations. The focus on developing children's play and socialising means that their emotional and social development, and their language skills, are improving. Most are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year, although reading, writing and calculation are weaker

than other skills. Good tracking and assessment arrangements have alerted the school to focus particularly on these areas of learning. Teaching is satisfactory with some good elements. Good relationships with the adults help the children's confidence and independence. Children are well cared for and trust the adults who work with them. They are guided well to appropriate play activities that also help them to learn. The outdoor area has a positive impact, particularly on children's physical development, although there is not always enough focused adult support to maximise learning. The good curriculum, based on topics such as growing plants with a 'garden centre' set up outside, covers all the areas of learning effectively. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement and standards, especially in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 1, and in English and science in Key Stage 2.
- Raise the achievement of boys through further improvements to teaching and the curriculum in order to sustain their interest in learning.
- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, by ensuring that all pupils are provided with tasks that are well matched to their needs, and work productively within time limits.

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

Standards at Key Stage 1 in 2007 were significantly below average in mathematics, because few pupils attained above average standards. In both reading and writing, boys' attainment was markedly lower than that of girls, but in mathematics there was little difference. At Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected level was below average in each of English, mathematics and science. This was also the case at the higher Level 5 in all subjects, and especially in science. Boys' lower performance was particularly evident in English and mathematics. The progress of both girls and boys in Key Stage 2 in 2007 was significantly below average on national comparisons. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils' progress has improved, so that it is now satisfactory in English, mathematics and science in all year groups. Those pupils with speech, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils know how to lead healthy lives and take up opportunities to do so. The school has met their request for fruit to be available for older as well as younger pupils. They keep fit through their enthusiastic participation in the wide range of sports clubs. Pupils feel safe, with very little bullying or racism, and most are confident that adults can resolve any disputes. The Special Reporters, who gather pupils' views and discuss improvements, play an important role in school development. Pupils currently have satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills, and use computers proficiently, which provides a sound basis for their future economic well-being. They respect each other and care about others' welfare. Pupils' spiritual development is good, and is well nourished through art and music, and such special experiences as

hatching duck eggs. Pupils are developing their understanding of life in other countries, though their experience of multicultural Britain is relatively limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Many features of lesson planning are good, but on occasions teachers give some pupils work that is either too easy for them or too hard. Teaching is most effective where the pace of learning is good. This holds pupils' interest well, including that of boys, and helps to ensure that pupils complete their work. Interactive whiteboards provide a good focus for whole-class work. In good lessons, teachers invite pupils to explain their understanding and reasoning. For example, one teacher asked pupils to explain how to convert one fraction into another. Another teacher gave pupils good opportunities to reflect on their learning through a well-focused discussion. These examples reflect good practice. However, such good learning opportunities are not consistently provided. Staff manage well the small number of pupils with attention problems, so that learning is rarely disrupted.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well designed. It builds pupils' confidence through the sequential development of literacy and numeracy skills, and addresses gaps in earlier learning identified by teachers' assessment. One example is the improved opportunities for speaking and listening work that now precede writing tasks. Good use is made of the computer suite and laptop bank to support learning. The theme-based approach involves pupils well in their learning because they find it motivating. All of these adaptations to the curriculum are helping to support better progress by boys. Curriculum planning often involves a rotation of tasks, when teachers and assistants undertake focused work with small groups, while other pupils work independently. This approach means that pupils develop the skills of independent working. The increased number of visits and visitors, linked to current topics, enhances learning well. Healthy living and personal safety are well supported by lessons in personal, social, health and moral education. Pupils from Year 3 onwards learn French. The number of clubs on offer, which include many sports, and the peripatetic music provision, provide good enrichment of learning, as several parents confirmed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Safeguarding procedures are carried out rigorously. Arrangements to ensure child protection are robust. Action by the school has reduced unauthorised absence to very low levels. The 'zero tolerance' approach to bad behaviour has led to some fixed-term exclusions, for entirely appropriate reasons, and has had a good impact. There is good provision for more able pupils who are identified and then challenged in different ways, such as organising fundraising projects. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their individual education plans, which are regularly updated with parental involvement. Any pupils who need extra support for learning benefit from guidance by teachers and assistants. Arrangements to set pupils targets, related to the next steps in their learning in reading, writing, mathematics and science, are well established. Pupils know their targets, and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The impact to date of the leadership team is seen in the good quality of pupils' personal development, of the curriculum and pastoral care, and of arrangements for pupils' academic guidance. Leaders undertake a wide range of activities to check the quality of the school's work. These lead to the clear priorities for improvement in the strategic development plan and subject action plans. Self-evaluation activities are presently undertaken largely by senior leaders, as the school has not yet developed a tier of middle managers. The school has a clear commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity. However, in practice this has been limited by the slower progress of some pupils, notably boys. Currently, the adaptations to teaching and the curriculum are having a good impact on boys' attitudes and their progress. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are beginning to offer greater challenge for improvement.

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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?	3
The effectiveness in the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	3
How well 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 interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

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	2
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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

21 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnham Copse Primary School, Tadley, RG26 4HN

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Burnham Copse Primary is a satisfactory school, and a happy place for children, as many of your parents have commented. There are plenty of positive things about your school. These are the most important ones.

- Your school has a happy atmosphere about it.
- You enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is good.
- You have very good relationships with each other, and with the teachers and other adults. They take good care of you.
- Your personal development is good.
- You are making satisfactory progress in your learning, but standards are below average.
- The teaching in your school is always at least satisfactory, and sometimes good.
- The teachers have planned a good curriculum, which you find interesting and motivating.
- Your Mums and Dads are pleased with the school.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents.

Your headteacher and other leaders have worked hard. They have made a good start at your new school, but some other things now need to be better. The school needs to:

- improve your standards, especially in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 1, and in English and science in Key Stage 2, so that your achievement is better
- raise boys' achievement by making learning even more interesting
- make sure teachers set tasks for you that are at the right levels for the different pupils in the class, and get the most out of you in lessons, so that all the teaching is good.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements which your teachers will be making. We really enjoyed our time in your school. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove
Lead Inspector