

# Burlington Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102565
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	308051
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Selwyn Ward

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	397
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>	Mr Simon Ridley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Mary Cowland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 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>	Burlington Road New Malden KT3 4LT
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8942 1586

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	308051

**Fax number**

020 8336 0992

<b>Age group</b>	3-7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school, and numbers have increased this year. Burlington caters for pupils from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. Around a third of the pupils are from Asian or Asian British backgrounds and around a third are White British. A very high proportion of children join the school at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The principal minority languages spoken are Tamil, Urdu and Korean. Relatively few pupils have, mostly moderate, learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In addition to those who start the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Nursery, up to a third of the children join the school at the start of the Reception Year. The school has a Children's Centre which opened in March 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Its success is built on a firm partnership with parents, who, in turn, are very supportive and appreciative of the way the school helps their children to make excellent progress, both academically and in their personal development. As a parent put it, 'The school is very well led and all the children and parents are proud to be part of a fantastic team.'

The headteacher, school leaders, staff team and governors share a vision of Burlington Infant as 'a forward thinking and innovative school'. School leaders have a very accurate picture of the school's many great strengths, and their perceptive monitoring of all that the school provides has identified areas where they believe there is scope for provision to be even better. They correctly identified that boys were making notably less progress than girls in their writing. Innovative measures taken over the past two years have helped to accelerate boys' progress so that they now generally do as well as the girls. These have included the introduction of more adventurously themed toys to help boys to develop their interest and confidence in storytelling. Standards have been rising steadily over the past three years so that, despite children's often low language skills when they start in EYFS, they are above average by the end of Year 2.

The lack of a sheltered outdoor area for EYFS limits opportunities for the children to freely choose activities outside. However, they are benefiting from an increasingly smooth transition from EYFS to Year 1, allowing them to better adjust to the more formal learning environment in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are very well cared for, so that they feel very safe and secure at school. The development of children's social skills is especially impressive. A parent spoke for many in commenting, 'I have seen my son grow in confidence as he has progressed through the school.' Relationships between pupils from different backgrounds are excellent. Again, several parents wrote to praise the way the school 'celebrates diversity and is so inclusive'.

An important factor in pupils' outstanding achievement is the way staff help to bring the curriculum to life by giving the children exciting activities that stimulate their imagination. The pupils remember what they have learnt in history because they vividly recall dressing up in Victorian costume and actually meeting an adult in role as Florence Nightingale. A parent described how their children had 'blossomed during their time at school and come home full of stories of the good things they've done'. Another wrote that their son 'bounces into school each day and comes home full of enthusiasm about the new things he has discovered and the day he has had'.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, so they set work that is challenging. Their questioning helps prompt pupils to develop their thinking as well as their speaking and listening skills. They succeed in establishing orderly classroom routines, so that pupils are attentive and mostly know what is expected of them. Sometimes, however, teachers' introductions go on for too long and opportunities are missed to set the pupils more varied practical activities. Where pupils have to sit on the carpet listening for periods of half an hour or more, some begin to get restless and the pace of learning slows.

The one concern that many parents voice in this popular school is over the current arrangements for the school's expansion. Their worry is that the school is 'in danger of losing its community feel'. Governors and school leaders are certainly alert to the challenges that expansion brings but are keen to extend the benefits of all that the school provides. The improvements achieved,

particularly over the past two years, show the school's excellent capacity to build further on its many successes.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children start in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding below those expected for their ages. Many are at an early stage of learning English. Parents are very appreciative of the good start that their children receive in the EYFS. They particularly commend the way their children are helped to settle into school and that, 'The teachers are very willing to help in any way they can.' High quality care and a secure environment support all children well. Children are very polite, confident and happy, and greatly enjoy coming to school. Children, particularly those learning English as an additional language, make good progress because staff interact very well with them to develop their vocabulary and extend their learning. Last year, an increased focus on teaching letters and sounds made a significant impact on children's learning in language and literacy. Observations and assessment of children's learning and what they need to learn next are sharply focused. By the end of the Reception Year, standards in many areas are in line with those expected for their age, but because many children are still consolidating their English language skills, they are below expectations in communication and language development.

The EYFS leadership has made a good start to introducing new arrangements for children's welfare. Learning activities are regularly reviewed to develop new skills. The school is beginning to improve the balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities by providing more opportunities for children to direct their own learning. The outdoor areas are often used well but, because they lack shelter, the facilities do not match the very good quality of those inside and do not offer children the same opportunities for ready access to different choices. In the new Reception class that has been added this year, children have to be escorted to the outside area.

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

- Ensure that all lessons include varied activities and that pupils are not expected to sit passively for too long listening to the teacher.
- Develop more opportunities for children in the EYFS to freely use the outside area.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

A parent summed up the views of many in commenting that their son had 'come on in leaps and bounds'. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make excellent progress to attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. This achievement is especially impressive for the many pupils who join the school at an early stage of learning English. Pupils make excellent progress because of their enthusiasm for learning and because the curriculum is made interesting and exciting. The progress that they make in their key literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils are proud of their school and this is reflected in their enthusiasm, attitudes and excellent behaviour. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong and they show respect and tolerance towards each other and adults. Relationships are a notable strength of the school. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work alongside each other and there is a strong sense of racial harmony. They feel safe in school because 'there is always someone to look after you'. They say that there is no bullying and that other pupils are kind, friendly and helpful. They know and fully understand the importance of making healthy choices at mealtimes and the need to take exercise. They greatly enjoy lessons because 'teachers make learning fun'. They particularly enjoy design and technology because 'you get to make a lot of things'. They like to take responsibility within the school community, for example as school councillors, where they have made decisions about the equipment used at playtimes.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers know their pupils well and plan work that challenges and extends them. Increasing use in lessons of role play and drama has helped to accelerate pupils' speaking and listening skills, which has in turn contributed to the rise in pupils' confidence and the standard of their writing. Very well focused support for those with additional learning needs, either because of language difficulties or for those with moderate learning difficulties, helps these pupils to make often exceptional progress. Classes are orderly, so that pupils generally understand what is expected of them and move between activities quickly and without fuss. Teachers make good use of questioning to check that pupils understand and to draw out more thoughtful responses. Sometimes, however, teachers' introductions go on for too long and otherwise attentive pupils begin to shuffle and fidget. Teachers' marking helps to focus pupils' attention on their targets and what they have learnt, but not all marking identifies for pupils how they can improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

It is the stimulating curriculum which helps to enthuse the pupils so that they want to work hard, learn and do well. Wider use of role play and drama has helped to enliven activities so that pupils have memorable experiences and increasingly learn through the thrill of discovery. They especially enjoy learning about their own and each other's cultures, celebrating different religious festivals and learning about the work of different artists. They make regular use of ICT, for example, to create their own pictures in the style of the painter Mondrian. Spotting that, previously, girls developed an interest in storytelling as a prelude to writing by playing with dolls, the school has taken the initiative in providing ample opportunities to develop similar skills among boys. Boys in a Reception Class were engrossed in stories they were creating using pirate ships and figures, although one boy grumbled that there were not enough eye patches to go around! The effect of this initiative is already very apparent further up the school in the vast improvement in the quality of boys' writing.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Parents comment that, 'The staff are all extremely caring and conscientious'. The school has succeeded in creating a very safe, secure and attractive learning environment in which all pupils are valued regardless of their circumstances. Within this safe and caring community, pupils are encouraged to reach high standards, both academically and personally. The progress of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties is monitored very carefully to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. The school meets all requirements for safeguarding, and child protection arrangements are secure. Attendance is monitored carefully and actions the school has taken to reduce absence have been effective, so that attendance is good. The school actively promotes equality and this is reflected in pupils' attitudes to each other. Teachers establish clear learning targets with pupils in lessons so pupils fully understand what they are expected to learn.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leaders at all levels promote high quality education and care by placing the child at the heart of everything they do. The headteacher provides excellent leadership by creating a learning culture in which all staff are encouraged to be creative and innovative to further improve pupils' learning. Targets set for pupils are challenging but attainable so all pupils can achieve their best. Through robust self-evaluation, the school has an excellent understanding of its strengths and has been able to prioritise appropriate actions for further improvement. Links with external partners are used to very good effect. Those with the adjacent junior school are particularly strong, involving some shared assessment of work and enabling a smooth transition from Year 2 to Year 3. The newly established Children's Centre has enabled the school to capitalise on a wealth of resources to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Relationships with parents are excellent. The school actively promotes community cohesion by drawing upon the experiences of families from overseas as well as by providing pupils with opportunities to understand how different people live. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and the challenges it faces through its current expansion.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### 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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

<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>	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	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

08 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burlington Infant and Nursery School, New Malden, KT3 4LT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Your parents told us that they think Burlington is an excellent school, and they are right. It is an exceedingly well run school where you are all making super progress in your literacy, numeracy and other subjects. We were delighted to see how very well you all get on with each other. It helps to make Burlington such a happy, friendly place to be. The school is certainly helping to turn you into confident young people very ready for the move to juniors and beyond.

The children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a jolly good start, but we have asked the school to try to make more opportunities for the children to choose for themselves when to play on activities that are outside. We were very pleased to see how much progress you all make in speaking, reading and writing skills as you move up the school. Those of you who are new to learning English make especially impressive progress. One of the reasons you all do so well is because staff look after you very well and help you when you need it. Teachers give you work that stretches you to do as well as you can, although we could see that sometimes you have to listen for quite a long time on the carpet. That is something we have asked the school to look at.

Another important reason for your success is the way the school gives you lots of interesting and exciting things to do and to learn. Year 2 children remembered a lot about the Victorians because they had the chance to dress up in Victorian costumes. I was very surprised, though, to discover you had met Florence Nightingale. I thought only Doctor Who could do that!

Thank you again for looking after us on our visit. Our very best wishes for the future. If you continue to work hard and do your best, I am sure that you will all do very well in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector