

Buriton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115869
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326278
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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)	76
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	Mrs Liz Cox
Headteacher	Mrs Danielle Brown
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Street Buriton Petersfield GU31 5RX
Telephone number	01730 263526
Fax number	01730 231982

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this small village school are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. This includes pupils with social or emotional problems, and those who find learning difficult. The school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Buriton Primary provides a good and rapidly improving quality of education. From a broadly average starting point as they enter Reception, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards. Particularly good headway has been made in raising achievement in reading and writing, and pupils in Years 2 and 6 reached high standards in these subjects in 2008. On the other hand, Year 6 pupils' attainment in mathematics was disappointing and this is rightly a school priority. Pupils are adept in information and communication technology (ICT), and good work was seen in art and design, history, geography and religious education.

The fact that pupils make good academic progress is not least due to their excellent attitudes. They behave extremely well, work hard and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer. As many parents testified, pupils' outstanding personal development owes much to the consistently effective teaching and the excellent curriculum. Much of the teaching has outstanding features. Teachers have high expectations and, supported by skilled assistants, they provide challenging tasks for all ability groups. At every turn, there is evidence of stimulating activities. During the inspection, Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, were fully absorbed in producing mask sculptures under the guidance of a specialist from a local secondary school. Pupils were eager to describe the wealth of enrichment activities they enjoy. Parents expressed their appreciation of the fact that the small number of staff go to great lengths in running clubs, organising visits and visitors and leading residential trips. The school's success in helping pupils to lead healthy lifestyles and to take regular exercise has been recognised by national awards for excellence in these areas. Pupils make a strong contribution to school life and the local community. They take their responsibilities seriously as school councillors and team captains and when carrying out routine tasks. Following 'job interviews', pupils are appointed as temporary secretaries, answering the phones politely and taking messages during lunchtimes.

The outstanding level of care, guidance and support pupils receive is evident in the way vulnerable pupils are nurtured. Pupils naturally turn to an adult if they want to share personal concerns. Pupils benefit from first-class academic guidance. Teachers have devised highly effective ways of ensuring pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve. They negotiate individual targets with pupils and regularly review them.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Recent improvements owe much to the excellent leadership of the headteacher. Many parents paid tribute to the impact she has made with comments such as, 'The ethos is excellent', 'We wouldn't send our children anywhere else' and 'I would not wish for any more from a school'. Governors are well informed and play a positive role in school improvement. The school's track record of improving standards demonstrates that it has an excellent capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception class is well run and provides a stimulating environment for children to learn and develop. Children are happy, safe and secure. As a result of effective teaching, they make good progress. By the end of Reception, standards are above those typical of the age group. Teamwork and daily discussion inform day-to-day planning which ensures children's prior learning is the foundation for subsequent work. The teacher and teaching assistant are regularly

supported by two experienced volunteers and this has a significant impact on the amount of contact children have with adults.

Children's good level of independence was evident as, when playing outside, one group spontaneously created a 'diversion' with traffic cones that others had to negotiate on their bicycles and pedal cars. Children respond well to opportunities to make choices and plan what they will be doing during the first part of each day. The outdoor space is used well but the lack of a covered area means play is restricted if the weather is bad. Many activities promote speaking and listening and children's creative development. For example, when playing in the 'hospital' role play area, they invent scenarios and, supported by adults, develop their vocabulary.

Parents value the partnership between them and the Reception staff and many commented about how well their children had settled in. Close links with the adjacent nursery and other pre-school settings help this process.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sustain the drive to ensure pupils make the best possible progress in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. From a broadly average starting point, they make good progress in the Reception class and through Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and sometimes exceptionally high. There has been an upward trend in recent years. The standards pupils achieve by the end of Year 6, in comparison with national averages, vary from year to year. Because of the small numbers in each year group, the results of one pupil can skew comparisons significantly, but standards are generally above average. The school's tracking information indicates that all the Year 6 pupils due to take national tests in 2009 are on course to reach the expected levels, with a very large proportion predicted to achieve the higher levels across the board. Almost all pupils build well on their starting points in Year 3. In 2008, pupils did not do as well in mathematics as they did in English and science. Projections indicate that this is being addressed successfully, but the school is right to sustain the focus on this subject to ensure consistent progress through Years 3 to 6.

Pupils who are falling behind are soon identified and, due to effective support, most catch up and achieve average levels by the end of Year 6. Some pupils who find learning particularly difficult do not take the national tests in English, mathematics and science, but they also build well on their prior attainment. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Indeed, boys do at least as well as girls in writing, against the national trend.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

A major strength in pupils' personal development is their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their high levels of maturity, excellent behaviour and extremely positive attitudes are clearly evident during lessons and breaktimes. This aspect of the school is held dear by parents, one of whom reflected the views of the vast majority when she commented, 'The children are confident, polite and considerate to others.' Pupils' spiritual development was obvious in their sensitive discussion about the horrors of war following a visit to the local D-Day Museum. They showed empathy with evacuees and their parents, reflecting

on how they would feel in a similar situation. Pupils gain an extremely good awareness of cultural diversity within and outside Britain. For example, they showed a very good understanding of similarities and differences between cultures when discussing the links between their own school and one in Ghana. Pupils have a keen sense of injustice and enthusiastically support those less fortunate than themselves by taking part in charity events, some of which they suggest and organise independently. Their good levels of competence in numeracy, literacy and ICT, together with the ability to share ideas and work cooperatively, mean they are extremely well prepared for the next stage of education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

All teachers establish a purposeful working environment in their classrooms. Pupils respond eagerly and are engaged because questions are focused, and teaching is well supported by visual resources. The skilful use of interactive whiteboards sustains pupils' attention and provides ready access to a wealth of resources to enhance their learning. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils, after looking at a number of dramatic seascapes, produced some excellent descriptive writing. One wrote, 'The wind was like a roaring lion pouncing on its prey.' Teachers make learning intentions clear and pupils are increasingly involved in evaluating their own progress. Prompts for learning on display in the classrooms support this process. For example, pupils frequently refer to a hierarchy of writing skills when reviewing their own efforts or commenting on one another's work. Such strategies have led to increasingly high standards in literacy, and similar approaches have been introduced in mathematics. The school's regular monitoring of teaching indicates that teaching and learning are good overall. This was borne out by the inspection, during which there were examples of outstanding practice.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides a rich range of experiences for all pupils. Careful planning helps to ensure that pupils in the mixed-age classes do not repeat earlier work. There are productive links between subjects. During work on the Tudors, pupils in the Year 3/4 class were introduced to Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet'. After hearing the outline story, they worked in small groups to write their own playscripts. Using models of imaginary creatures they had made, they created a sequence of digital pictures and recorded the dialogue and narration. They were justifiably proud of their productions. One pupil said, 'We didn't like the sad ending so we wrote a happy one. It was great fun.' Staff take full advantage of the local area when planning work. Following a visit to the village duck pond, one Year 2 pupil wrote, '...the shadows creeping across the water's edge. The helicopter twirling. The seeds falling and planting trees.' Such activities enrich learning and enhance pupils' personal development extremely well. From a strong position, the school is well placed to succeed in its aim to develop the curriculum further to enhance pupils' understanding of environmental issues, such as sustainability.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The high level of care and support given to pupils throughout the school contributes significantly to their enjoyment of school and their eagerness to learn. The school values highly the views

of pupils and parents that it gathers and uses to improve provision. Parents are in no doubt that their children are safe and well cared for. As one parent put it, 'Children get individual treatment. The emphasis on building confidence as well as focusing on the curriculum means that they leave here being happy, confident and well-rounded people.' Procedures for child protection and health and safety are well established. The focus the school gives to promoting healthy lifestyles successfully shapes pupils' attitudes, including the importance of a balanced diet and exercise. In class, pupils receive much ongoing support and encouragement. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully. They give praise when this is due and give very clear guidance as to how pupils can improve. Easily understood symbols provide prompts for pupils' subsequent work. For example, in feedback on writing, a heart suggests they should include their feelings when writing in the first person.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

When the headteacher took up her post several inadequacies in the school were noted and staff were somewhat demoralised. Parents, staff and governors all paid tribute to the way the headteacher galvanised the school community and successfully brought about a transformation in morale. In this small school, all staff have an additional responsibility. They say they have been empowered under the headteacher's leadership. They now pool ideas and share expertise and lead developments effectively. This helps to ensure that all aspects of the school are systematically reviewed. A close eye is kept on pupils' progress each year and any dips in performance are identified and addressed. Following a drop in national test results in mathematics, for example, there is renewed drive to ensure all pupils reach their potential.

The school plays a central part in village life and a strong commitment to community cohesion is evident from pupils' activities further afield. For example, older pupils visit a locality that contrasts with their immediate neighbourhood.

Since the last inspection, with the support of the local authority, improvements have been made on many fronts. Weaknesses in provision for ICT have been eradicated. Resources are now very good, teachers use them effectively and pupils have good computer skills. Great strides have been made in tracking pupils' progress and in involving them in reviewing their own work. The quality of teaching has improved and standards have risen. Governors provide very good support and carry out their responsibilities effectively. Inclusion is a high priority, and self-evaluation is systematic and rigorous.

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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?	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?	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	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	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

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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**

16 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buriton Primary School, Petersfield, GU31 5RX

Thank you for making me so welcome during my visit. You were very helpful and keen to let me know what makes Buriton Primary special. You go to a good school where each one of you is cared for and taught very well. You rise to the challenges given, make good progress and reach high standards in your work. In order to help some of you do even better, I agree with teachers that they should continue to keep a close eye on your work in mathematics to make sure you do as well as you possibly can.

I was highly impressed by the way adults and children get on together. Your behaviour is outstanding. You are polite and helpful and show a great deal of respect for one another and the adults that work with you. I certainly felt very welcome and was pleased that so many of you wanted to show me your work. Your school is a happy place in which to learn and you are growing up to be confident and responsible young people. You told me how teachers make lessons interesting and fun, and it was good to hear how much you enjoy and learn from visits within the village and from other educational trips. Lessons in personal, social and health education, in physical education, and in science help you gain a really good understanding of the importance of eating healthily, keeping fit, and knowing how to stay safe. The large number of children taking part in after school clubs shows how much you take exercise seriously. Congratulations on achieving the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

One of the main reasons your school has continued to improve since it was last inspected is because all the adults work well together with excellent leadership from your headteacher. They are committed to continuing to make your school even better. I am confident that, with the excellent attitudes you have to your work, you will try your hardest to help the school go from strength to strength.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Rob Crompton

Lead Inspector