

Burnsall Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121622
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359050
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elizabeth Grayshon
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Jameson
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
School address	Burnsall Skipton North Yorkshire BD23 6BP
Telephone number	01756 720273
Fax number	01756 720273
Email address	admin@burnsall.n-yorks.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons and observed three teachers. She spoke to pupils about their work and looked at learning in lessons and in pupils' books. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. She observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, school policies, safeguarding documents and details of the progress made by pupils. The responses to 26 questionnaires from parents and carers, and those from pupils and staff were scrutinised.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The evidence to indicate whether or not pupils are achieving their potential.
- The pupils' response to the school's provision for their personal development.
- The reasons why the school judges leadership, management, teaching and curriculum as good when achievement is satisfactory.
- The rigour with which leaders, managers and the governing body are identifying and addressing school priorities.
- The work of the leadership team in ensuring that the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully met.

Information about the school

The school is very small compared to other primary schools. It draws a few of its pupils from the village it serves, but most arrive by bus from the surrounding rural area. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average. All children are organised into mixed-age classes.

Since the previous inspection, the school has been affected by significant staffing turbulence. The headteacher and all the teachers have been appointed since that time. There have been eight headteachers in the last three years. The current headteacher teaches for half the week. The school has been awarded the Activemark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has improved very rapidly under the effective leadership of the new headteacher who has welcomed and responded effectively to the advice and support from several local partnerships on how to move the school forward. Teachers are supportive of change and morale is high. The outstanding behaviour of pupils and their exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development provide an environment which is welcoming and friendly.

The impact of concerted and effective action to bring about change is fully reflected in the improved attainment of pupils. On entry to school, children's skills are in line with age-related expectations; by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average in English and mathematics. This represents good achievement. This improvement is the result of a strong drive to involve pupils in their learning. They are active participants in all lessons, they know their targets and how they can improve their work. They are excited by their learning, as they are constantly challenged. Skilled teachers know their pupils well and they plan carefully to meet individual needs. Pupils' progress is monitored very well.

Currently, only the headteacher has leadership and management responsibilities in the school. Although she manages this well, she has many responsibilities that make it difficult to ensure that changes can be sustained effectively over time. The headteacher and the governing body know the school well and have very accurately identified priorities for improvement. These are being addressed very systematically through the school development plan, which is used very effectively to support change. As such, the school's capacity to sustain its improvement is good.

The development plan and school documentation indicate that the Early Years Foundation Stage requires further development. The inspection confirms this view. Planning lacks focus on what children are expected to learn and children are not always sufficiently supported by an adult to challenge their thinking and extend learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the current rise in attainment by distributing leadership roles to extend the sharing of good practice and to ensure that monitoring is as rigorous as possible in order to sustain the current rate of change.
- Improve the outcomes for children in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving organisation and ensuring planning focuses on children's learning
 - ensuring that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils mature into skilled learners. They recognise that they have responsibilities for their own learning. Pupils enjoy the challenge of learning in school, work collaboratively on all areas of the curriculum and achieve well. Their well-developed thinking skills and good language development drive their learning and progress. Lunchtime follows mathematics lessons and, throughout lunch, older pupils enjoy discussing the problem that they were debating in the classroom. Their excitement at learning is impressive. They use all the strategies available to them in the classroom to improve their performance and they respond well to teachers' comments in their books.

Lesson observations, work scrutiny and school data all indicate that pupils throughout the school make good progress in English and mathematics and that, by the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average. Previous weaknesses in mathematics have been removed by the introduction of a practical curriculum and emphasis on the use and development of number skills. There is very little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive such well-targeted, individual support so that their progress is at least as good as their peers and sometimes better. The more-able pupils attain the higher levels expected of them.

Pupils are mature and confident. They are curious and interested in the world and are very reflective about a wide range of moral and social issues. Pupils articulate their ideas well and offer and relate well to different points of view. This is a school where pupils value diversity and are interested in different cultures and traditions. They contribute well to their small school community through the well-managed school council that has a strong voice in the school. Links with the local community are effective, as pupils are active participants in many events and help to maintain the local culture and traditions. There is genuine care for other people and pupils enjoy learning about global issues, such as 'Fair Trade'. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils feel safe and help to keep each other safe. They are aware of the need to eat healthily and to keep fit. Their attendance is above average and their well-developed basic and personal skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching enables pupils to become effective learners. Teachers are very skilful at ensuring that pupils are fully engaged in their own learning in every lesson. Thorough preparation and good resources enable this to happen. Planning reflects good knowledge of the needs of each pupil, based on data, observations and discussions with teaching assistants and, consequently, pupils' needs are fully met. In all classes, there is a high level of challenge that excites pupils and expectations are high. The well-planned learning environment provides pupils with prompts, such as the learning wall, to help them to improve their work and marking is exemplary. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning and relationships are excellent.

The curriculum is developing well. The new topic-based approach is beginning to complement the investigative approach to teaching and motivates pupils to learn. It is planned carefully to develop and apply a range of pupils' basic skills in different subjects. A good example was seen in a lesson on mega-structures, when careful observation and measuring produced some impressive models. Topics also include lessons on enterprise, sustainability and personal development. A full range of enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular activities is available to pupils. Many of these are provided by external providers or by the active school cluster to which Burnsall is linked. Key Stage 2 pupils relish particularly Thursday mornings at the local high school, where they experience swimming and physical education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The school provides a welcoming environment. Pastoral care is good and pupils are safe in school. Pupils are known well to all staff and their needs are met appropriately. When necessary, pupils are referred to an external professional for specialist help. Well-targeted additional interventions are provided in school for pupils identified as needing more help with their learning. Parents and carers say that the school communicates well with them through newsletters and the school web-site and that school reports are very informative. Transition arrangements into the Reception class and to secondary education are effective. The school's effective strategies ensure pupils' above average attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's rapid improvement reflects the ambition and drive of the headteacher, who has effectively shared her vision for all pupils to become effective learners within a friendly school community. The headteacher, currently, carries out all management roles, including monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and the quality of provision. Although this is done carefully, it is a heavy responsibility for one person and roles are not sufficiently shared to ensure the same level of evaluation and management of change can be sustained. This system also limits the extent to which staff can share their expertise. Nevertheless, actions are in place to address weaknesses and attainment is rising. The work of the school is focused on improving the quality of teaching by using rigorous assessment to inform planning and to help pupils take responsibility for their learning. High expectations are consistently communicated to staff and the impact is visible in improving attainment and the meeting of challenging targets. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and has effective procedures for tackling discrimination. It is an inclusive community where all pupils make similar progress, individual needs are met very effectively and gaps in performance have been closed.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is very supportive and becoming increasingly involved in the life of the school. The governing body ensures statutory requirements are met and is aware of the strengths of the school and the areas that require improvement. It is currently developing the skills it needs to monitor and evaluate performance rigorously and to check on safeguarding procedures. Pupils are safe in school and all requirements are met. The school is a very cohesive community, but work on community cohesion in terms of communities beyond the local area is at an early stage of development. The school has evaluated its provision and is beginning to make links to various different communities.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 are located in the same classroom. Most children start the Reception class with skills levels in line with age-related expectations in all areas, except in writing. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception class and catch up with their writing so they are ready to start the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1. However, these children are not always making enough progress and the current provision does not fully meet their needs. Planning for their sessions lacks detail and a focus on learning. This is because staff are too rigorously following the strategy of children directing their own learning. As a result, children are left on their own for too long with no-one to focus their ideas or to challenge them with good questions. When these children are taught with Year 1 and 2 pupils, they are more engaged and productive. In this situation, one child produced a wonderful model castle with a working draw-bridge. Resources are of high quality and children have full access to an excellent outdoor area. They have some good opportunities to develop their ICT skills.

Leadership and management of the provision are satisfactory and requirements for children are broadly met. Relationships are good and children are usually happy and well behaved. They are known well to staff and are safe and properly cared for. Their progress is recorded well in their profiles, which provide a good link with home, enabling parents and carers to see what their children have achieved in school. This is appreciated by the parents and carers who do not have daily contact with the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A high percentage of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Where they made comments, they mention specifically the significant improvement in school in the last two years and the strength of leadership. They also appreciate how well pupils of different ages integrate. These positive views of parents and carers are reflected in the report's findings.

There were very few negative comments. These included playground problems not being dealt with and topics being repeated as children move through school. The inspector looked at these areas and found that the curriculum is being adjusted so that there should not be repetition of topics in future. During the inspection, procedures for ensuring good behaviour were seen to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Burnsall Voluntary Aided Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 42 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	69	8	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	50	12	46	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	15	21	81	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	46	14	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	50	13	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	73	6	23	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	42	14	54	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	38	14	54	2	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	58	10	38	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	65	8	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	73	6	23	1	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burnsall Voluntary Aided Primary School, Skipton, BD23 6BP

I would like to thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. A special 'thank you' goes to the pupils who gave up some of their time to talk to me about their activities and those who looked after me at lunchtime.

You attend a good school where the headteacher and all the staff ensure that you are well cared for. They have made a lot of improvements in school to help you make better progress. I was very impressed by how keen you are to learn and to talk about what you have learned in mathematics at the lunch table. I agree with you when you say that 'our school has got a lot better at helping pupils to learn'. You are making good use of the 'working walls' in your classrooms to help you to do this. Your behaviour is outstanding and you are very good at discussing ideas and taking account of different viewpoints. Also, you know how to stay safe and healthy and you attend school regularly.

You make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, your work is above average in English and mathematics. However, I think that children in the Reception class need more help with their learning and that teachers could be more involved in leading subjects in school.

One of the reasons for my visit was to see how your school can improve. I have asked your headteacher to:

- share the responsibility for leading a subject, such as English, mathematics or science, and help other teachers to sustain the improvements that are helping you make better progress
- help children in the Reception class to make more progress.

You can help to improve your school by using all the 'learning tools' in your classroom to improve your work.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Carmen Markham

Lead inspector

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