

Burford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123014
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359344
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Jill Bavin

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Hoggett
Headteacher	Jenny Dyer
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2007
School address	Priory Lane Burford OX18 4SG
Telephone number	01993 822159
Fax number	01993 822792
Email address	office2251@burford-pri.oxon.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who observed four teachers, visited eight lessons, and made five extra short visits to classes. Additionally, the team met with staff, pupils and members of the governing body and analysed work in pupils' books. The inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation including policies and documentation related to safeguarding, data about pupils' progress, monitoring and evaluation records and school development plans. Responses from staff, pupils and 64 parents and carers were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The school's effectiveness in raising standards in writing throughout the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school's strategies to give pupils knowledge and an understanding of the cultural diversity that exists within the United Kingdom.
- The impact of topic work on pupils' learning.

Information about the school

In spite of a steady increase in pupil numbers over recent years, this is a much smaller school than most in the primary phase. In all classes two year groups learn together. The school serves a Traveller community and families from a local Royal Air Force base. A higher proportion of pupils join and leave the school at other than expected times.

Children are admitted to the nursery in the term after their third birthday. They join the Reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, is usually a little below the average for most primary schools. Most of these pupils have difficulties related to acquiring key literacy and numeracy skills. Most pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including the proportion speaking English as an additional language, is much lower than is usually found.

The school provides a breakfast and an after-school club which are managed by the governing body and formed part of this inspection. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2010. The school received the Healthy School award in 2007 in recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles. It also holds Activemark in recognition of its physical education provision.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving school with a sound capacity for further development. The current headteacher has introduced initiatives to give pupils more time to develop their ideas on paper. These are already having a positive impact and pupils' writing is improving throughout the school. Attainment fluctuates because of small groups of pupils joining the school, but typically it is broadly average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment in reading is a little higher than in writing and mathematics. The headteacher has extended systems to check individual pupil progress more frequently and in greater detail. This information about pupils' individual needs is shared with teachers who are held more closely to account than previously for pupils' progress. Consequently, they are using assessment more effectively. As a result, English and mathematics lessons are routinely planned to modify work for different groups of pupils according to their needs. This is a key feature in promoting satisfactory levels of learning for pupils of different ages and abilities within the class. That said, while making satisfactory progress, pupils are not always challenged as fully as possible throughout the lesson, especially more-able pupils. Plans to boost pupils' mathematical learning through small group work are in place but not yet fully implemented. Teachers increasingly share learning intentions with pupils, which provide them with an understanding of what they are expected to learn as a whole class. Sharing individual goals with pupils either during lessons or in books is less consistent, so opportunities for pupils to gain a clearer understanding of their specific next steps in learning are missed.

Since the previous inspection the school has developed more links between subjects, most noticeably in the development of information and communication technology which adds interest for pupils. While contributing to satisfactory learning, the curriculum does not consistently accelerate learning for pupils because too often topics are planned as activities to extend knowledge, without reference to key literacy and mathematical skills. Consequently, pupils miss chances to practise these skills. Opportunities to use topics that extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom are also missed. Since the previous inspection the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved, most noticeably in the use of the outdoor environment to enrich children's learning. Opportunities for children to develop early writing skills and mathematical ideas in the nursery and Reception class are good.

The headteacher has rapidly gained an astute understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has skilfully begun to initiate necessary changes with the support of parents and staff. By providing a clear and close analysis of pupils' progress, the headteacher has enabled the governing body to reach a realistic understanding of the school's current priorities. Together they have reviewed and updated policies which contribute to the school's satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Pupils and members of the governing body remark that behaviour around school has become more

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orderly since September. Clear and accurate self-evaluation, resulting in improvements in behaviour, safeguarding, arrangements for checking pupils' progress and the use of assessment in planning lessons, demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further. The school's work to promote community cohesion has not been a priority, and the implementation of current plans is at an early stage of development. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and their knowledge of faiths and cultures that differ from their own is limited. Previous strengths in pastoral care have been sustained. Care, guidance and support are good. This accounts for pupils' good sense of well-being and for the significant social and emotional progress made by individual pupils who face particularly challenging circumstances.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate learning and progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - implementing plans to provide small group work in mathematics for specific pupils immediately after the spring half-term 2011.
 - ensuring that pupils' skills are developed incrementally and practised regularly in a variety of contexts
 - implementing plans to provide small group work in mathematics for specific pupils immediately after the spring half-term 2011.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - providing more consistent challenge for all pupils, especially the higher-attaining pupils
 - giving pupils a clearer idea of what they are aiming for in lessons and through marking of their work.
 - giving pupils a clearer idea of what they are aiming for in lessons and through marking of their work.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of communities that differ from their own by:
 - forging links with a school in a contrasting part of the United Kingdom
 - developing relevant topics within the curriculum that inform pupils about other cultures.
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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils join the school with average levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. They make satisfactory progress and continue to work at the levels expected for their age. Different groups of pupils, including those who join the school at different times, the few pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, all make satisfactory progress from their starting points.

Pupils' behaviour contributes to adequate learning in lessons, which proceeds with little time being wasted. Most pupils concentrate throughout teachers' introductions and explanations reasonably well. In group work they address the given task and share resources cooperatively, but they are not practised at responding rapidly to teachers'

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expectations and setting standards for themselves. Behaviour and learning in lessons are good when pupils are enthused by activities which harness different skills. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils made good links between mathematical knowledge and scientific principles while working independently or in small groups constructing three-dimensional shapes and testing their strength. While satisfactory, learning and progress slows in some lessons due to pupils missing opportunities to extend their learning further after they have finished their initial tasks. As a result, occasionally pupils spend too much time on follow-up activities with too little challenge.

While pupils welcome opportunities to take responsibility within school, for example as play leaders or school councillors, their contribution to communities beyond school are more limited. They have a good understanding of how to make safe and healthy choices and interest in sports activities is strong, reflecting the school's work and awards in these areas. As pupils' writing improves they increasingly express emotion and empathy, for example about the Second World War through poetry or letters written as evacuees. Although opportunities for pupils to explore wider spiritual, cultural and moral issues affecting people globally and around the United Kingdom are limited, they have a good understanding of right and wrong within the school community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

In all lessons seen, relationships between teachers and pupils were good and conducive to a constructive approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of technology. This helps them to introduce new ideas clearly with added interest for pupils. Planning regularly identifies different activities for different groups of pupils but does not always give distinct learning intentions for these different groups. The strengths in teaching are undermined by an inconsistent approach to drawing lessons to a conclusion. The usefulness of marking varies considerably. Too often it over praises, without identifying what a pupil has achieved and what they need to do next. When teaching assistants are suitably deployed and well briefed they support good learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. The impact of these sessions is lessened by an inconsistent approach to how effectively teaching assistants are deployed within lessons.

There is a good balance of artistic and sporting activities available to pupils. They enjoy special events such as trips to nearby museums and the good variety of clubs. Work to develop pupils' personal development successfully gives them a good understanding of health and safety issues. Pupils enjoy the various topics that provide links between subjects, especially the good access they have to technology. They create their own animated websites which link with the school's website and interactive games. There are computerised literacy and numeracy programmes to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but not a wide range of different programmes available to meet highly individual needs. Provision for gifted and talented pupils has begun through links with the secondary school, but these are at an early stage of development.

Strengths in pastoral care are appreciated by pupils, and parents and carers alike. Pupils are entirely confident that they have an adult to turn to if necessary. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide warm and nurturing environments where pupils play happily and safely. Staff strike a skilful balance between safeguarding pupils and giving them sufficient freedom to select their own activities and express their own ideas. Staff respond flexibly to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable pupils and can point to significant successes in increasing pupils' emotional well-being and readiness to learn.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides sensitive and considered leadership with a robust focus on raising pupils' achievement. She has conducted a thorough and accurate evaluation of key areas of the school's work, identifying for example that teaching assistants are not always using their training for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the governing body and staff are more fully informed and are embracing greater responsibilities focused on a realistic appraisal of the school's work. Consequently, the school is soundly moving forward with a common sense of purpose. Staff are responding positively to feedback about their teaching and, together with the governing body, are increasingly making links between provision and its impact on outcomes for pupils. Most significantly the closer analysis of pupils' achievement places a stronger emphasis on rates of progress from their differing starting points and helps to identify any areas of underachievement. This contributes to the planned action points for different groups of pupils to ensure no group is discriminated against and the satisfactory promotion of equality of opportunity for pupils. A good start has been made in using this information to set challenging targets, although it is too soon for the full impact to be felt.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory; governors contribute to the school's good understanding of its local community and its welcoming ethos, as identified by parents, including those in the Travelling community. The school recognises its responsibility for preparing pupils for diversity within the United Kingdom and unquestionably promotes anti-discriminatory attitudes amongst the school community. Plans are in place to promote community cohesion fully and link the school with other different communities, both locally and nationally. While addressing other priorities, these plans have not been fully implemented. At the time of the inspection the governing body's procedures for safeguarding pupils were satisfactory. Records related to vetting staff and child protection meet requirements. A comprehensive range of policies and appropriate staff training underpins safe practice in school. Since September several policies have been reviewed to update latest school practice. A key strength is pupils' understanding of safe practices and their good sense of security in school.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management, based on effective self-evaluation, have resulted in an improved position for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. Children now typically make good progress in developing skills across all areas of learning and there are recent examples of some children making outstanding progress in their individual development. Adults share a good understanding of how children at this age learn best. Effective teamwork results in children receiving consistent messages about how to behave and the extent to which their ideas are valued. Along with good communication with parents, this helps the youngest and newest children to settle quickly and supports good learning for all groups of children. There are good opportunities for children to develop key skills with, for example, plenty of clipboards available so children can write, or play write, their ideas at various activities.

A key strength is the improved use of the outdoor environment which successfully stimulates children to practise and develop a variety of skills through pursuing their own ideas with natural materials. For example, during the inspection, in the paddock, children experimented with the mathematical ideas of size, weight and balance while 'digging' with long sticks in sand and soil, and moving large planks to make 'bridges' and walkways. All adults are involved in keeping a close record of children's achievements on a daily basis. The team is beginning to identify next steps for children but these are not all equally clear and so do not always inform the supportive comments that adults make while facilitating children's independent work. Key skills, such as linking letters and sounds, are taught in a lively and engaging manner which helps most children to make good progress within the session.

Good attention is paid to keeping children safe and secure. Particularly impressive is the secure knowledge that children have of the rules that keep them safe around the fire on which they toast marshmallows. They explained to the lead inspector that she must not

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venture beyond the cones that mark a safe distance from the fire 'because closer is too hot'.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A higher proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires than is usual. A few parents or carers disagreed that their child was making enough progress; that the school helps them to support their child's learning; and, deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Very few disagreed that their child enjoyed school, that teaching was good and that they were happy with the school overall. The inspection found teaching, behaviour management and routes of communication with parents to be satisfactory. Parents and carers were unanimous in their agreement that the school keeps their children safe and helps them maintain a healthy lifestyle. Inspection evidence found this area to be a strength in the school. There was also unanimous agreement that they are informed about progress and that the school is led and managed effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Burford 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 inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	81	11	17	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	80	12	19	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	58	25	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	58	23	36	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	59	24	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	61	23	36	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	66	21	33	0	0	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)	38	59	22	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	55	28	44	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	59	24	38	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	58	27	42	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	64	22	34	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	72	17	27	1	2	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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burford Primary School, Burford OX18 4SG

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to all of you who shared your ideas and work with us. We found that your school is satisfactory, which means it does some things well and is still working to improve other things.

Some of the best things about your school are how much you enjoy it, how safe you feel and how much you understand about making safe and healthy choices. You know that staff care about you and you can turn to them for help if you need to. We discovered that behaviour around school has improved this year, and you told us that you 'don't charge about' so much on the way to lunch. You are kind to each other and because everyone feels secure it helps you to make steady progress in English and mathematics. We were pleased to see that your writing is improving as you write more often and for longer.

The governing body, headteacher and staff want to keep making your school even better. They have already planned to give some of you extra small group work in mathematics, we have asked them to start this soon. We have asked them to help you to become even better writers and mathematicians by giving you even more chances to use your writing and mathematical skills when you are doing topic work. We have asked the teachers to make sure that the work is always hard enough for you all through the lesson, and to make sure that you know more often exactly what you have achieved and need to aim for next. You can help by sensibly telling your teacher when you have finished work and if you think you could meet even greater challenges. We have also asked them to help you learn about life in other parts of the United Kingdom that are different from Burford.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead inspector

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