

Burbage Junior School

Grove Road, Burbage, Hinckley, LE10 2AD

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement, including that of disadvantaged pupils, requires improvement. Progress is too variable in different year groups and from year to year.
- Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in writing and mathematics. The most-able pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable in mathematics because teachers set work that is too easy for them.
- Leaders have not set targets for improvement with teachers that hold them rigorously to account for the progress of the pupils that they teach. As a result, teaching over time and achievement have not been good.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- Parents and pupils express concerns about behaviour. The school's communication with parents is not effective in dealing with their concerns.
- Pupils are kept safe. However, school records relating to pupils' behaviour are not well organised.
- Governors do not make sure that the information they receive from leaders about achievement and teaching is accurate.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly gained an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He is working well with the leaders who led the school prior to his appointment. As a result, teaching is improving.
- Pupils make good progress in reading as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils benefit from well-planned support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Key British values are emphasised well throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Attendance is consistently above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons, which included seeing all year groups. Two of the lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised by the inspectors.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- A variety of documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding and the school's improvement plans.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by 38 members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of the 75 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and letters received from parents, and spoke with parents to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David West	Additional Inspector
Jane Johnson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Burbage is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher took up his post in April 2015. Two senior leaders led the school for the two terms prior to this appointment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers have high expectations of all pupils and set them challenging enough work, particularly in writing and mathematics
 - using marking to give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work and check that pupils follow the advice given
 - giving the most-able pupils work that consistently requires them to apply advanced reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - reports are written by school leaders for governors which help them to accurately identify the standards pupils achieve in all year groups
 - support for disadvantaged pupils is accurately targeted so that they make better progress and attain higher standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6
 - leaders and governors communicate more effectively with parents
 - records relating to behaviour and safety are complete, well organised and enable leaders to make changes to policies and practices and check they lead to improvement.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not done enough to develop a culture of consistently high expectations for teaching and learning. As a result, teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work that inspires all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, most of whom do not have disabilities or special educational needs, is not good enough. The pupil premium funds are now used more effectively than previously. This is because school leaders have taken action to address the weak performance of disadvantaged pupils and have made better use of the extra funds this year. Teachers and teaching assistants have been appointed to provide additional support for this group of pupils. This has led to better progress for this group which is now in line with their peers in school. However, it is still not rapid enough to narrow the gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally by end of Year 6.
- In recent years, inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities have led to pupils not being given sufficiently challenging work. This meant that pupils did not make the progress they should have. The recently appointed headteacher is clear in his expectations of teachers, and the newly formed leadership team is now that ensuring assessments are accurate.
- Leaders have not always used information about whether all pupils are progressing quickly enough in every year group when making judgements about teachers' effectiveness. However, the appointment of new senior and middle leaders during the past year has refreshed the management team and they are checking teaching quality in a more informed way. This is ensuring that teachers' performance is improving, as are rates of pupils' progress.
- The school's behaviour records are not well organised. For example, when staff record incidents about playground behaviour it is not clear if pupils are displaying a particular type of behaviour, such as bullying. As a result, it is difficult to ensure that subsequent actions to address poor behaviour are appropriate and ultimately effective. This restricts leaders' ability to work well enough with parents to resolve such issues. It also means that leaders, including governors, are not readily able to reflect on all the information available so that improvements are made to policy and practice, where appropriate.
- Teachers, including those who are newly qualified, value the support, training and challenge they receive. Regular pupil progress discussions, involving subject and senior leaders, are ensuring teachers are better held to account. However, some teachers still do not follow the advice they are given, for example in using the agreed marking policy to help pupils to understand how to improve their work and therefore make stronger progress.
- The recent support from the local authority has resulted in some improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In every year group, pupils have an equal opportunity to share their ideas. This helps to ensure that all pupils succeed and learn from and about each other through effective collaboration. Most pupils understand right from wrong, but a minority do not always make the right decisions at playtimes which lead to some pupils becoming upset. This behaviour is non-discriminatory. Until recently staff have not been sufficiently vigilant in ensuring these pupils subsequently make better decisions. Leaders now ensure such behaviour does not occur.
- Over the past year, topics have been carefully planned and taught so that they engage pupils' interest and motivate them in their learning. This has created a climate in which pupils behave well and are keen to learn. Pupils' learning is accelerating through this improved curriculum. In particular, it includes celebrating the difference and contribution of different cultures and how democracy works today in this country. As a result, British values are promoted well and pupils are well prepared for life in British society.
- The school has used its primary school physical education and sport funding successfully to meet its aim of enabling all pupils to have chances to take part in physical activity. The school has always enjoyed a

strong reputation for competitive sports and so this funding has been used wisely to provide activities such as 'secret sports' that encourage pupils who previously were less motivated to take part. This has resulted in pupils developing greater self-esteem as they represent their school in a growing range of sports, including indoor curling and kite flying.

- Leaders have ensured that staff have received suitable training and are clear about their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure that statutory duties for safeguarding pupils are met, including those relating to child protection. This has helped to ensure that appropriate referrals to the local authority have been made when they have been concerned about a child.

■ The governance of the school:

- The effectiveness of governance requires improvement. Governors are not as informed of all aspects of the school's work as they could be. This has restricted their ability to be more effective in engaging fully with parents.
- In the past, governors have provided some challenge to the headteacher by asking questions about pupils' achievement and what senior leaders are doing to raise standards. However, they have been too accepting of the senior leaders' responses and have not had effective enough ways of checking up for themselves. The new headteacher is already providing more detailed information in his reports. This is supporting governors in their understanding about how well pupils are doing and enabling them to better hold the headteacher and other school staff to account.
- Governors have a general understanding of how well teachers are performing, through reports from senior leaders. However, they have not assured themselves that teachers are performing as well as they can. They have not for example checked sharply enough that pupils have made at least good progress as a result of good teaching. Governors understand how leaders manage teachers' performance and that only good teaching should be rewarded. Improved reports from the headteacher, discussed by governors in their meetings, are helping them to understand how weaker teaching is now being tackled by school leaders and how effective this is.
- The governing body has been restructured over the past year with new governors appointed with specific skills, experience and expertise. Governance has been strengthened with governors spending more time in school. Governors are now working alongside senior leaders, and more recently with the new headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body, in order to understand fully their role and what is expected of them. This has led to better commitment, involvement and understanding of the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Sometimes pupils feel unhappy about playground behaviour because in the past they have been worried about how some pupils have behaved towards them. They say that although teachers usually sorted out these problems, incidents did sometimes recur. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved over the past year and parents agree. This is due to incidents being resolved quickly and more permanently.
- In lessons, pupils are mostly well behaved. They are keen to learn and, when the teaching challenges them to think harder, they are very attentive and enthusiastic. If the work in lessons is too easy, however, they can lose focus and, as a result, their learning slows.
- Around school and between lessons, pupils are well behaved and orderly. They politely greet visitors and are keen to talk about their school. They cooperate very well with each other, particularly in lessons where they readily share their ideas. This helps them to effectively develop their ideas and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Mutual trust between staff and a very large majority of pupils is evident in all classrooms, with everyone's opinions given equal consideration. For example, Year 4 pupils are encouraged to express their views on how to write sentences that create strong emotions for the reader. They deepen these views further in the activities they work on, set by the teacher. This helps pupils to develop empathy and a deeper understanding of the topics taught.

- Attendance is above the national average and has been sustained over this academic year. The school keeps detailed records about attendance and uses them to tackle absence when it becomes a concern. This has had a positive impact on attendance rates for all groups of pupils. There have been no pupil exclusions in recent years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Most pupils feel and are kept safe. Some parents express concerns about behaviour which, until recently, have included bullying. Prior to this academic year, some parents felt the school did not communicate effectively with them when they raised concerns. They say there has been improvement.
- School records, which log behavioural concerns and subsequent actions taken, are disorganised. This means it is difficult to gain an overview of the sequence of events, the actions taken and the consequent impact on behaviour. Records do not always show if and when planned actions have taken place. As a result, leaders have not been able to keep parents fully and effectively informed of developments. The new headteacher is already aware of this and is developing better practice.
- The school has all relevant documents in place to support pupils' safety. Risk assessments ensure pupils are safe, both in school and on educational visits. For example, risk assessments are written to support staff when they take pupils to the swimming pool. Such processes are not always regularly evaluated to ensure they are as effective as they can be. For example, parents have for some time expressed concern about the size and access through the school gates, but these views have only recently been used to inform actual changes.
- The school provides pupils with skills for dealing with risky situations outside school. For example, they understand the need to take precautions when using the internet and know why these are necessary. Governors now make regular visits to school to check out pupils' understanding about safety.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding procedures have improved over the last year. Staff have the required training and leaders make checks to ensure that school policies are implemented consistently. The school is rigorous in ensuring that all staff, including those working with pupils outside the school day, are suitably vetted.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, gaps in pupils' knowledge are still evident as a result of weaker teaching in the past. Teaching is now leading to pupils making better rates of progress. However, this is not yet rapid enough to secure good outcomes by the time pupils leave the school.
- Teachers do not always give pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, work that is sufficiently demanding. Pupils spend too little time working on more challenging tasks to deepen their understanding.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' writing and mathematics work is increasingly helping pupils to make better progress. However, this is not consistently the case. The effectiveness of marking varies between classes in each year group. Some written comments in mathematics, do not consistently identify clearly what pupils need to do to make improvements. In writing, while marking is generally better than it is in mathematics, teachers do not make sure pupils use the guidance they have been given to improve their subsequent writing.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in mathematics because the work teachers set for them is too often not challenging enough. This is especially the case for the most-able pupils because sometimes this group of pupils is not required to use their skills to solve harder problems. As a result, pupils do not consistently show mastery of skills in the new National Curriculum.
- The teaching of writing varies in quality. Where learning is most effective, teachers use their secure subject knowledge to challenge pupils by asking questions that probe their understanding. As a result,

pupils think more deeply about their work and make improvements. However, this practice is inconsistent and in a few classes in different year groups pupils are set work or asked questions that do not challenge them effectively in their writing.

- Homework is set regularly and most pupils understand why they are expected to learn outside of the school day. On the whole, they complete the tasks set but say they do not always enjoy the repetitive nature of much of the work given.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress as a result of teaching that effectively develops their comprehension skills. This enables them to form well-thought through opinions, which they use and present well when answering questions about their reading. This type of activity contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching assistants, including those who work with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, provide good support and challenge for the pupils they work with. Their good subject knowledge helps them to ask pupils searching questions in order to check how well they have understood their work. This helps adults to plan work for pupils that fills precise gaps in their knowledge and skills.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics as they move through the school. This was confirmed by the work seen in pupils' books, which showed that pupils were not sufficiently challenged in their writing and mathematics.
- National Curriculum test results and assessments for Year 6 pupils in 2014 showed attainment was high in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. This was an improvement on the previous year's results. Progress, however, was not good, as fewer pupils made better than expected progress in any subject compared with others of their age nationally. Mathematics was the weakest subject.
- Pupils arrive in Year 3 with high standards from their previous school. Leaders are keen to ensure that such attainment information is accurate as the pupils start their learning journey through the school. However, the systems for making such judgements and the resulting records are not sufficiently robust. This means that it is difficult for leaders to demonstrate how well pupils are progressing from their various starting points.
- The 2014 Year 6 test results showed that disadvantaged pupils were two and a half terms behind their classmates in reading and mathematics, and two terms behind in writing. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were a term behind writing, a term and a half in reading, and over two terms in mathematics. The progress of the current group of disadvantaged pupils is better than last year. However, it is not rapid enough to reduce these attainment gaps.
- In all year groups, pupils do not make consistently good progress in mathematics as they are not challenged regularly enough in their mathematical activities. For the most-able pupils, this limits the progress they make as they have fewer opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.
- Last year, the proportion of most-able pupils making expected progress in any subject was lower than average in every subject. This year, they are making at least expected progress with progress in reading and writing stronger than in mathematics. This is because the reading and writing work is more challenging than it is in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading. The work in pupils' books indicates that they are not consistently challenged to use harder writing skills. Writing is not rigorously checked to ensure pupils are practising such skills in order to embed them in their work.
- Pupils make good progress in reading over their time in the school. Pupils enjoy their reading and quickly

become fluent by applying their skills in all subjects.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is due to the high quality intervention they receive from adults who provide them with the extra help they need. The good rates of progress made by these pupils are enabling them group to catch up with their classmates.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119964
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	455990

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Doran
Headteacher	Nic Bates
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2012
Telephone number	01455 630970
Fax number	01455 630979
Email address	office@burbage-jun.leics.sch.uk

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