

Burrsville Infant Academy

Craigfield Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 4HR

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership team, ably led by the executive headteacher, is highly focused and effective. The team is well supported by governors and the academy trust. Leaders have secured many improvements and managed changes in staffing and the expanding school roll very well. As a result, pupils receive a good education.
- Pupils achieve good standards in all year groups in English and mathematics because teaching is now good across the school.
- Leaders ensure that very good care is provided for pupils and their families. This is greatly appreciated by parents. Highly positive relationships have been established between parents and adults in the school. This has enabled leaders to identify and overcome many barriers to learning for pupils.
- Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are highly effective. Meticulous records are kept and thoroughly reviewed so that nothing is overlooked. Leaders carefully consider particular safeguarding issues which are relevant to the school community. They plan actions which will minimise risk and provide training so that all staff know the signs to look for which may indicate concerns.
- Sometimes, adults do not provide the most able pupils with tasks which challenge them sufficiently. As a result, most-able pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of making.
- Where teaching does not closely match pupils' needs, some pupils do not pay as much attention to their work as they should. This slows their progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently plan tasks which challenge the most able so that they make the rapid progress they are capable of
 - all adults have equally high expectations of pupils' work and attitudes to learning
 - time is well used in all classes to maximise learning.
- Ensure that progress in other subjects such as history and geography is as rapid as in English and mathematics by:
 - using the school's new assessment systems to pinpoint where progress could be better and to put improvements in place as a result
 - new subject leaders developing their leadership roles and holding teachers to account for pupils' progress
 - teachers expecting work of the same high standard in these subjects as in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including governors and trustees, are highly ambitious for all pupils. They recognise the great steps forward taken by the school in securing improvements, particularly the improvements in pupils' achievement. However, they are determined to ensure that these successes are built on further. The executive headteacher works very effectively with the leadership team and together they are unambiguous in their high expectations for all staff and pupils.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. They tackle underperformance robustly and refuse to accept weak teaching. This has led to a large number of staffing changes since the predecessor school was inspected and judged to require special measures. At the time of this inspection, two teachers were very new to the school. Leaders recognise that staff changes have brought challenges in establishing consistency in expectations. Nevertheless, they have been successful in ensuring that the quality of teaching is good across the school. This has been achieved by senior leaders making very explicit their expectations of staff and by providing quality professional support for teachers. For example, training is provided through the trust and by using in-house expertise. Teachers, including those new to the profession, told inspectors that they are well supported by senior leaders and that leaders provide strong role models through their professional expertise.
- The school is recognised as a 'knowledge centre' by the trust and so is used by other schools to disseminate good practice. Leaders, in turn, seek out best practice from schools locally and beyond. As a result, leaders ensure that the school is outward-looking and leaders keep up to date with new developments and research in education locally and nationally.
- Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of what the school does well and what needs further improvement because they draw on evidence from a variety of sources. For example, they regularly visit lessons, check pupils' books, carry out 'learning walks' to find out about learning in all classes with governors and trustees, scrutinise assessment information and talk with pupils and parents. From their evaluation of this broad evidence base, they draw up effective and detailed plans for further improvements.
- Leaders have ensured that the school provides a broad curriculum which is interesting and enjoyable. The school's aim, to 'create a joy in learning', underpins leaders' decisions about curriculum planning. For example, all pupils take part in 'Forest School' which enables pupils to learn about their environment and the natural world; the curriculum is enhanced by trips and visitors, such as from an African dance group, and by events such as 'Bedtime story' evening. Leaders are determined that pupils will have memorable experiences in school which will motivate and excite pupils so that they want to learn. As a result, pupils say that they enjoy school and the activities provided.
- Leaders have ensured that sports premium funding provided to promote engagement with sport is used well. A range of sporting clubs and competitions are provided and participation in sports has increased so that pupils are more active and their fitness improves. By employing a specialist coach who worked with teachers over the past two years, leaders have ensured that teachers are now confident in delivering physical

education lessons. The sports premium is now being used to provide swimming lessons for all pupils prior to them moving to the junior school.

- British values are promoted well by leaders. They feature in assemblies, for example, when pupils learn about justice and democracy, and are reinforced through activities such as voting for school councillors. Leaders also are very aware of the need to ensure that pupils value diversity. They look for opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences of people from other backgrounds, cultures and faiths. For example, pupils recently took part in a project supporting refugee children, learning about why some children found themselves in this position. As a result, pupils are learning about how to become good citizens and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Parents speak very highly of the school and the support provided for their children. This is because leaders work hard to establish very strong links with parents. For example, they hold regular open mornings where parents are invited to come in to see their child working or experience a particular lesson. Parents are kept up to date via social media and regular newsletters. As a result, almost all parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire said that they were well informed about the school's activities and would recommend the school to another parent.
- Some middle leaders are new to their post. They are still developing their understanding of their roles and their plans for further improvement are yet to have impact on improving pupil outcomes. Assessment systems in some subjects are at an early stage in implementation and so are not being used to pinpoint where pupils are making good progress and where further improvements are needed.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide strong support and challenge for leaders. They have willingly accepted training and support, for example from the local authority and from the trust, to enable them to be more effective in their roles. They know the school well because they visit regularly, meet with leaders and with pupils and receive regular reports about pupils' progress in different subjects. Governors are also very reflective and look for ways to improve their performance further, auditing the skills of governors so that they can be best utilised. They have identified that they need to have a sharper focus for their regular visits which more closely dovetails with the school's improvement plan.
- Governors carefully monitor the school's finances and the use of additional funding, such as that provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. They know how funding is spent and what is having the most impact. They know that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points, particularly those from low starting points. They acknowledge that more needs to be done to support the most able disadvantaged pupils so that they make even better progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is highly effective. All statutory checks on staff are carried out and recorded carefully. Records of concerns about pupils are meticulous because leaders know that keeping pupils safe is of central importance. All concerns are recorded accurately by staff and passed swiftly to designated leaders who follow up rigorously. Leaders liaise with external agencies to ensure that action is taken promptly when

concerns are raised. Training is updated very regularly and so all staff know exactly what to do if they have a concern. Staff are aware of current safeguarding issues such as risk of extremism and are knowledgeable about how this might apply in the context of their school. Senior leaders review all safeguarding concerns for all pupils on a very regular basis, to check with each other that all follow-up action has been taken. This regular double-check ensures that nothing is overlooked and pupils are kept extremely safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good because teachers plan and organise the majority of learning tasks well. Teachers across each year group plan together so that pupils in different classes in the same year group enjoy comparable lessons. At the time of the inspection, two teachers were very new to the school and were quickly getting to grips with the needs and strengths of the pupils in their classes. They were supported well by other adults in their year groups in doing so.
- Teachers and pupils have positive relationships and pupils willingly comply with teachers' instructions in lessons. Where teaching is well matched to pupils' needs, pupils show a high level of interest in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 2 were enjoying a technology lesson, enthusiastically testing out how to make the strongest bridge out of paper.
- Reading is promoted very well across the school. Classes have attractive reading areas and the school library is well resourced. Pupils know the school's system for selecting reading books at the correct level and the most able readers are well supported in developing their skills further. The teaching of phonics is good because it is well structured and planned. Pupils talk about what they have read and regularly undertake tasks to develop their comprehension skills. As a result, pupils make good progress in reading.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects, for example in science and topic work. Teachers plan memorable events, such as a 'cinema experience', as a starting point for writing. This means that all pupils can draw on an event that they have been interested in and want to write about, and so produce better-quality work.
- Questioning is used effectively by most teachers to check pupils' understanding of concepts. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, abiding by the school's marking policy. In many cases, teachers' comments are effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Occasionally, teachers do not identify early enough errors such as number and letter reversals and so pupils continue to make similar errors in subsequent work.
- Teaching in subjects such as art is good and enables pupils to learn subject-specific skills such as painting and clay modelling. Pupils refine and improve their skills through regular opportunities to create art work which is of a high standard. Pupils are taught about different artists and produce their own work in similar styles.
- Adults generally support pupils well, asking them appropriate questions and helping to move learning on. Occasionally, pupils are given too much support when they are capable of working with greater independence.

- Home learning is used well to support learning in lessons. Pupils enjoy carrying out projects at home with parents and bringing their finished projects in to share with friends. This helps pupils to apply their skills independently and so extends learning.
- Sometimes, teachers do not plan tasks which extend the most able pupils sufficiently. For example, in mathematics, pupils sometimes complete repeated calculations when they are ready to deepen their skills by applying them in a different context.
- Where tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs, some pupils lose interest and do not pay as much attention to their work as they should. Sometimes, teachers do not insist that pupils work as productively as they should and so, in some lessons, pupils make slower progress.
- In some subjects such as history and geography, teachers do not expect as much from pupils as they are capable of. For example, teachers sometimes accept writing which is not of the same high standard as in English books. Too few opportunities are provided for the most able in these subjects to extend their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are welcoming and confident in speaking with adults. When asked, they are able to explain what they are learning about because adults make the purpose of lessons clear to pupils. Pupils say that the comments made by teachers help them know how to improve their work further.
- Pupils told inspectors that the school is a safe place and that there is always someone to speak to if they are hurt or have a problem. Pupils say that bullying is very rare in school. They know about how to keep themselves safe, for example learning about e-safety regularly. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed that the school is a safe place.
- Pupils and their parents are well supported in many ways. For example, a family support worker works with parents of pupils with attendance issues and this has improved the attendance of a number of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have ensured that speech and language support is provided within school because they have identified this as a particular barrier to learning in the school. This helps these pupils with their speech, and so with reading and spelling also. Play therapy is provided in school to support pupils with social and emotional difficulties so that they can be successful in school. Adults work with families beyond school, for example attending medical appointments with parents when needed to provide support for them. Parents say that the support provided 'is amazing' and that adults in school 'go the extra mile' to help overcome barriers to learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The trust 'Touchstones' and 'Burrsville values' of love, friendship, respect and equality are reinforced regularly in lessons and assemblies. As a result, pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and know that they should treat others as they wish to be treated themselves. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures in lessons, for example in religious education and personal social and health education. They also do so in

lessons such as English, for example by studying texts from different cultures. Pupils develop their social skills, for example working in pairs and groups in lessons. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example by being 'playground pals', looking after the library and as school council members. This is helping pupils to understand how to be good citizens and preparing them well for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders have identified that some pupils do not always show as much resilience as they should, sometimes giving up rather than persevering with tasks. They have planned a programme to further promote positive attitudes to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils told inspectors that playtimes are happy times, and few pupils misbehave.
- The school is a calm and orderly environment where learning can take place. Pupils who have difficulties with their behaviour are well managed so that they rarely disrupt the learning of others.
- Attendance is good because adults rigorously track attendance and follow up absence with parents quickly. They spend time identifying why pupils are absent and put in place strategies to support parents in improving the attendance of their child. Positive incentives are provided to encourage good attendance, including certificates for the best attendance. Because lots of interesting opportunities are provided within the curriculum, pupils want to come to school.
- Occasionally, where tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs, some pupils do not behave as well as they should. For example, they do not pay close attention when an adult is speaking, or concentrate on their work as they should do. This slows the progress they make in some lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress because teaching is good across the school.
- Pupil outcomes by the end of Year 2 have improved significantly since the predecessor school was inspected. This is because teaching has improved. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils from lower starting points make particularly rapid progress, enabling them to reach the expected standard by the end of Year 2. However, sometimes, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in lessons and so do not make as much progress as they are capable of.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. They have carefully planned work in class and receive appropriate additional teaching where needed. As a result, these pupils make good progress across the school.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged, particularly those from low starting points, make good progress in English and mathematics because the additional funding provided for these pupils is used effectively. For example, one-to-one conferencing by class teachers is provided to identify and address areas of difficulty quickly so that pupils catch up. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also given good support, which enables them to make good progress in learning English and accessing the curriculum.

- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the government's Year 1 phonics check has risen and is above the national average because the teaching of reading is good.
- In some subjects, such as art, pupils make good progress because teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and to apply these appropriately. In other subjects, such as history and geography, pupils do not make as much progress because adults' expectations of pupils in these subjects are not as high as in English and mathematics. In these subjects, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently.

Early years provision

Good

- The Reception classes provide a vibrant and welcoming learning environment. They are well organised and enhanced by attractive displays to promote learning and celebrate children's work.
- Adults know children well, and their needs. They take all steps necessary to ensure that children are safe when playing and learning inside and outside the classrooms.
- A good range of tasks are provided indoors and outdoors to promote learning. Children have opportunities to work independently and with an adult. Adults support learning well, asking questions and intervening in children's play.
- The leader for early years is effective. She supports her team well and checks on provision regularly across the three classes. She plans effectively for further improvements.
- Adults assess children accurately and carefully. They record their assessments so that there is a clear picture of each child's progress across different areas of learning. Assessments are used to effectively plan subsequent activities to move learning on. As a result, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard by the end of the Reception Year is above that found nationally.
- Adults have established good relationships with parents. Transition from nursery to the Reception classes is well managed with visits to feeder nurseries and taster visits by children. Parents are encouraged to contribute to assessments of their child's skills and progress. They are invited into class at the start of the day to chat with adults and take part in tasks with their child. A class 'learning journey' is displayed in each class so that parents know what their child has been learning about. Children themselves take increasing responsibility for creating this as the year progresses.
- Children are sociable and kind towards one another. Adults provide plentiful opportunities for children to share resources and to enjoy playing together sensibly. Occasionally, adults do not encourage children sufficiently to take part in the full range of activities provided. Consequently, some children remain with the same favourite activities for too long and do not extend their learning in other areas.
- Some most able children are not provided with tasks which challenge them enough. As a result, some do not make the progress that they are capable of, particularly in writing.

School details

Unique reference number	139808
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10019584

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Byrne
Executive headteacher	Sinead Harper
Telephone number	01255 425106
Website	www.burrsville-inf.essex.sch.uk/
Email address	head@burrsville-inf.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than the average-size primary school compared to schools nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and known to be eligible for free school meals is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs who are supported by the

school is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by a statement or education, health and care plan is similar to that found nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups, playtimes and lunchtimes. Some observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents.
- Inspectors met with a selection of parents in the playground and with some pupils from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors listened to a small number of pupils read from Years 1 and 2. Inspectors spoke with the chair of the governing body and with members of the academy's trust.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff and arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media).
- The views of 64 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. The views of 21 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Maria Curry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

James Richards

Ofsted Inspector

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