

Burscough Bridge St John's Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancashire L40 4AE

Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, governors and staff have successfully created a school community based on tolerance, respect and a thirst for learning. They strive for continuous improvement.
- Subject leaders energetically and confidently fulfil their roles. They value the school's team spirit and take an active part in school improvement.
- Governors know the school well and support it effectively. They are actively involved in its work and carefully monitor its improvement.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are very safe at school and value being part of a close, caring community. They know how to keep safe.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They enjoy school and relish the learning opportunities that it provides. Attendance is above the national average.
- There are many and varied opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for showing an understanding of British values. Staff prepare pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Their needs are well evaluated and they receive effective support.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are well structured and enhanced with stimulating resources. Teachers provide pupils with useful feedback that helps them to improve their work.
- Overall, pupils' outcomes across the school are good, including for the small number of disadvantaged pupils. Achievement is particularly good in key stage 2. In key stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is also good. However, leaders know that they must increase the proportion of the most able pupils, especially boys, who achieve greater depth in their learning.
- The provision for early years is good. It is well led and enables children to make good progress. The school recognises though that both the indoor and outdoor environments require more development to ensure that they consistently provide children with opportunities to deepen their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in key stage 1 and so accelerate pupils' progress, so that more of the most able pupils, especially boys, achieve outcomes at greater depth.
- Further enhance the quality of the indoor and outdoor areas in early years so that they provide children with more opportunities to deepen their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, well supported by staff and governors, has created a school community based on tolerance, respect and friendship. Its Christian ethos underpins all of its work. Both staff and pupils feel that they are part of a team which works and learns together. Parents comment that there is 'a great community feeling in the school'. Leaders' drive for continuous improvement is evident, and has secured consistently good teaching and increasingly strong progress.
- School leaders have accurately assessed the school's strengths and areas for development. They are aware of the need to make improvements to enable pupils to achieve greater depth in key stage 1. They also know that the indoor and outdoor areas in early years are still developing. Strategies are in place to address these issues, there are promising signs that these actions are beginning to have a positive impact and leaders' successes to date show that there is strong capacity to improve further.
- Subject leaders undertake their roles and responsibilities with enthusiasm and confidence. Their close relationship with governors demonstrates the school's spirit of partnership. They take an active role in school improvement, including checking pupils' work in books and assessing pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is imaginatively delivered. The school's approach, in which a range of subjects are linked by an overall theme, has proved successful in engaging pupils and broadening their learning. For example, learning for pupils in Year 1 about the Great Fire of London was enhanced by work in subjects such as design and technology and music. Effective links between literacy and the wider curriculum are achieved through the use of related class novels. Provision for music and art are strong, and pupils enjoy exploring different types of art and music and the work of famous composers and artists.
- Visits and visitors provide additional opportunities to extend learning. For example, pupils visited the seaside as part of their work about coastal environments and learning about animals was augmented by a trip to the zoo. Trips to art galleries have extended pupils' understanding of different types of art. A visiting pantomime group gave pupils first-hand experience of drama.
- The school's Christian nature and community ethos cultivate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and foster a strong sense of respect, tolerance and acceptance. Pupils are also given opportunities for self-reflection. Studying the local community has extended pupils' sense of belonging beyond the school and multicultural events help to create an appreciation of the diverse nature of British society. A link with a child in Uganda has provided pupils with a valuable insight into the life of a peer in another part of the world.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Opportunities to understand British values and heritage are extensive. British heritage is explored in lessons and projects on the monarchy and Roman and Anglo-Saxon Britain. The sacrifice of the First World War is commemorated through Remembrance Day. The election of the school council and other leadership roles give pupils experience of the democratic process. The

school's sporting provision helps to develop teamwork and fair play.

- Procedures for evaluating staff performance are comprehensive. Staff targets are closely linked to improvement priorities and reviewed with rigour. Staff are very positive about the process. They believe that it boosts partnership and welcome the training opportunities that it provides.
- The pupil premium funding is well used. Both the barriers to learning and the individual needs of disadvantaged pupils are carefully assessed. Effective support is then provided to address both their learning needs and personal development. All staff and governors closely monitor its impact. As a result, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is typically better than that of their peers over time.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is successfully used. Specialist coaches extend the sports provision by introducing new sports such as badminton, gymnastics and orienteering. Specialist teachers also jointly deliver lessons with staff to extend their knowledge and expertise. In addition, they organise individual events such as a fitness day. Funding provides pupils with more chances to participate in external competitions with increasing success.
- The funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effectively used. Their needs are carefully defined and they are well supported. Parents are very positive about the support that their children receive.
- Arrangements for preparing older pupils for the move to secondary school are robust and help to prepare pupils well for their next steps in education. Year 6 pupils visit their new secondary school, while joint teaching and use of the secondary school's science facilities also help pupils to know what to expect. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are introduced to secondary staff to support transition.
- The school works effectively with parents. Parents are welcomed at the start of the school day by the headteacher and staff. Weekly newsletters and the 'open door' policy ensure clear communication, which parents appreciate. One typical comment from a parent was: 'You can approach the teachers regarding anything whenever you need to. Everyone is very approachable.' Parents are given many opportunities to share their children's experiences and support their learning. Workshops for parents include e-safety, phonics and reading. The school invites parents to come in and work with their children in Year 1 and early years and to attend celebration assemblies. Reports to parents are comprehensive and informative.
- Leaders use a good range of strategies to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. They then use their findings to identify potential improvements. This process has helped to secure consistently good teaching across the school. However, leaders have not been wholly successful in their efforts to increase the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in key stage 1.
- The local authority undertakes a largely monitoring role for a school that it defines as good. This process assists in measuring the school's strengths and areas for development. The local authority has also provided a range of training for governors and staff.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They understand its strengths and areas for improvement, and provide effective support and challenge. Governors' attachment to individual subject areas and a programme of focused visits allow them to evaluate closely the school's progress against targets and improvement priorities. Governors know how the process for measuring staff performance is linked to the school's improvement priorities, including pupils' outcomes. They sign off all pay awards.
- Governors understand how funding provided by the pupil premium and the physical education and sport premium is used, and accurately measure its impact. They are particularly proud of the school's sporting provision.
- Governors help to make sure that safeguarding is effective. They ensure that the processes for staff recruitment meet requirements and check risk assessments. Governors have received training in child protection, safer recruitment and the 'Prevent' strategy. A strength is their support for e-safety. A specialist governor employs his expertise to help to make sure that the school's information and communication technology (ICT) provision is very safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School safeguarding documentation is comprehensive and all staff have received relevant training. The procedures for staff recruitment meet requirements and are regularly monitored by the headteacher and chair of governors. The school site is very secure.
- The school makes sure that pupils know how to keep safe. They are made aware of potential risks and how to avoid them. For example, pupils clearly understand the danger of the misuse of social media. Parents believe that their children are very safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is of a consistently good quality and is improving. Well-planned lessons and engaging resources engage pupils well and stimulate learning.
- Teachers regularly demonstrate strong questioning skills, using questions skilfully to review and increase understanding. For example, in Year 2, the teacher made a deliberate mistake in a classwork example. When pupils spotted the error, they were asked why it was wrong and what the correct answer was.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning. They are very clear about pupils' needs and employ well-devised strategies to help them learn. The use of small intervention groups is an effective feature of their support. These groups are very well focused and allow a clear element of challenge. They contribute well to pupils' good progress.
- Homework is an integral part of teaching. The homework policy has been developed in

partnership with parents to ensure their understanding and support. This has proved very successful. One parent related that the homework set stretches pupils' capabilities and encourages enhanced knowledge. Homework is set weekly for all pupils and includes nightly reading. Examples seen indicate that it successfully develops and challenges learning.

- Reading is taught effectively and, as a result, pupils typically enjoy reading. They read aloud with confidence and fluency. In Year 3, pupils could accurately use punctuation such as exclamation marks to determine expression. Staff promote reading well. Regular, themed events are organised and a visiting storyteller stimulated younger pupils' interest in books and stories. Reading is further supported through pupils accessing the school's well-stocked library.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Interesting activities, including games and stimulating resources, support learning well. Close links between reading, writing and spelling have helped to broaden learning.
- Writing is taught well. Pupils' writing skills are developed very effectively across a range of subjects, and evidence in books indicates that varied styles of writing are encouraged and well developed. Careful attention is given to the quality of handwriting, with clear targets to secure improvement.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Pupils develop mathematical skills well and teachers then use problem-solving activities to enhance pupils' skills and assess their knowledge. Mathematical games are used effectively to support pupils' engagement, while teachers also ensure that pupils have opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in different areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers have high expectations and generally plan work to meet pupils' different abilities. For example, in Year 5, the teacher and pupils spoke exclusively in Spanish, stimulating increased fluency and confidence. However, sometimes in key stage 1, activities are not carefully enough explained to make sure that pupils are able to understand what to do to achieve greater depth.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The school's very strong sense of community and its Christian ethos have resulted in pupils who are very tolerant, respectful and caring. Pupils feel very safe at school. They appreciate both the support of teachers and the secure nature of the school site. One said, 'Teachers are kind and always help you. What could be better?' Pupils' very clear sense of mutual respect and friendship enables them to look after each other and help to make sure that everyone is safe.
- Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe is very well developed. They can clearly articulate how to stay safe online and explain the dangers of social media. Visitors and lessons teach them about fire, road and water safety. Lessons in first aid are provided for Year 6 pupils. Parents overwhelmingly believe that their children are safe at school.

One said, 'I have no concerns about safety or anything else.'

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to stay healthy. The popular sports provision actively supports fitness. Pupils develop a very secure understanding of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and of smoking, and also learn the importance of using medicines safely. The farm shop project includes information on maintaining a healthy diet.
- Pupils are given opportunities to discuss and exchange their views. In an assembly on diversity, all pupils could express their views. Their comments were listened to respectfully by others. They also develop leadership skills well. Older pupils organise games and sports activities for younger ones, and Year 6 monitors have successfully run charity events such as cake sales and 'Run for cancer'.
- Appreciating and understanding diversity is a high priority for the school. Displays explain the beliefs of different faiths and, during the inspection, a whole-school assembly challenged pupils to reflect on what it may be like to be different. A visit to Liverpool gave pupils an understanding of wider British society. Pupils very clearly articulate the school's values and told inspectors, 'Everyone should be treated the same. We all learn together.'
- Bullying is very rare. One older pupil said, 'I can't ever remember it happening.' School documentation provides evidence of its rarity. Pupils are taught about what bullying is and have an excellent understanding of its different forms, including racial, physical and cyber bullying. Pupils feel confident that if bullying does occur, it will be dealt with promptly by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave very well during break times and lunchtimes and when moving around the school. They are always supportive and respectful. Pupils revel in the school's sense of community and the partnership that it engenders. They are very friendly and courteous. Neither pupils nor teachers tolerate hurtful, unkind words.
- Pupils come to lessons eager to learn. They engage fully in their work, and value the support and challenge that they receive from teachers. A pupil made a proposal to the school to reduce break and lunchtimes to provide more time in lessons.
- Pupils very much enjoy school, and this is reflected in their attendance. Overall attendance is above average currently and over time. The low numbers and specific circumstances of some pupil groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have special education needs and/or disabilities, have led to some fluctuations in the reported percentage attendance over time. However, the school is vigilant in its monitoring and implements effective strategies, including using external agencies, to rectify any emerging issues. School attendance information and case studies indicate their success. Pupils are always punctual.
- The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour, which pupils are aware of and respond exceptionally well to. The behaviour policy includes a clear balance of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the rewards provided for good behaviour and appreciate its celebration. Parents correctly believe that behaviour is of

a high standard.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The outcomes of national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2016 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standards. They were also above average in English, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Outcomes at the higher standard were broadly average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in Year 6 in 2016 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Current school information and inspection evidence indicate that these outcomes are being sustained. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- At the end of Year 2 in 2016, outcomes at the expected standard were broadly average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in these areas was below average. Currently, in a much smaller Year 2 group containing some new arrivals, the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard is similar in reading and mathematics but less strong in writing. There is some indication of improvement at greater depth in mathematics, but this improvement is less evident in reading and writing. Over time, fewer boys than girls have reached the higher standards by the end of key stage 1. Efforts are being made to tackle this issue and evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 1, at both the expected standard and greater depth, is improving for both boys and girls.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been below average over time. Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme and staff have received relevant training. A further effort has been made to link more closely the use of phonics in writing and reading. New and exciting resources have been introduced to increase pupils' engagement. These strategies have had a clear impact and current pupils' attainment in phonics is rising.
- The small numbers of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Parents are particularly grateful for the sympathetic and effective way that their children are supported and that they are safe and happy at school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils across the school is low, and in some classes there may be only one or two disadvantaged pupils. Overall, evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils across the school make typically good progress. Any difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, and with other pupils nationally, has been eliminated.
- The most able pupils make good progress in key stage 2 and many reach the higher attainment standards. Fewer pupils in key stage 1 reach the higher standard and are working at greater depth; this is particularly the case for boys in key stage 1.

Early years provision

Good

- From starting points in all areas of learning that are broadly typical for their age, children are currently making good progress. This represents an improvement over the previous year, when attainment dipped to be broadly average, having typically been better than average in previous years. The small number of disadvantaged children in early years also make good progress, and additional funding is well used to support their learning. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The leadership and management of early years are good. The early years coordinator is well qualified and ensures that staff are well deployed to support children's learning. Staff have an accurate understanding of children's learning needs and monitor their progress carefully.
- Teaching is good. Staff enthusiastically devise and deliver activities that are exciting and full of fun. Questioning is well used to enhance thinking skills and reinforce learning. Staff respond quickly if children are in danger of falling behind, and support for these children is a strength. When the need arises, children are very effectively supported by well-designed interventions. In one example, children were helped to acquire addition skills through an engaging activity using well-chosen, colourful resources.
- Phonics is imaginatively taught and this results in good progress. Games are devised to add enjoyment and challenge. For example, children were given specific sounds and then sent on a treasure hunt to find words that contained them. The activity also encouraged cooperation, as children often worked together.
- Children behave very well and eagerly engage in their learning. They understand rules and routines, and respond well to adults' instructions. Children's independence is developed by allowing them to choose when they have their snacks.
- Children's work is carefully assessed. Learning journals are completed by staff and then moderated by the early years coordinator. Assessment information is transferred to a new tracking system which allows staff to measure children's progress and step in more quickly if they see any weaker areas of learning.
- Children are kept safe and well looked after. Both learning areas are carefully supervised and children understand potential dangers. All staff have had the required safeguarding training, and statutory welfare requirements are met.
- The involvement of parents is a strength of early years. Home visits and 'Ready for school' sessions provide a positive start and parents also contribute to children's initial assessments. Workshops for parents, an 'open door' policy and a weekly newsletter further encourage parents' involvement in children's learning. A section in the children's learning journals allows parents to comment on learning at home.
- While outcomes are improving again in early years, leaders recognise that there is more to be done. The learning environment, indoors and outdoors, does not consistently provide children with the range of opportunities needed to deepen their learning and thus further accelerate their progress.

School details

Unique reference number	119376
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10032362

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Neilson
Headteacher	Karen Cartwright
Telephone number	01704 893323
Website	www.st-johns-burscough.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-johns-burscough.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school does not have a nursery. The breakfast club and an after-school club are managed by an independent provider subject to its own inspection. It was judged as good in May 2016.

- The local authority plays mainly a monitoring role to this good school.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor targets. These define the minimum expectations of pupil's progress and attainment at the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have been in post for 12 years.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons and part lessons. They also observed the start of school, registration, an assembly, break and lunchtimes, and the end of the school day.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils, four representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions also took place with parents and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books during lessons. They also listened to pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documentation referring to development planning and self-evaluation, minutes of the governing body, a monitoring report from the local authority and information on pupils' outcomes. They also examined documents concerning attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 44 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 43 parental responses to its free-text facility. They also considered 11 responses to the staff questionnaire and 132 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mike Merva, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Peach	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Williamson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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