

Burwell Village College (Primary)

The Causeway, Burwell, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB25 0DU

Inspection dates

15–16 March 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders' plans for improvement are not precise. They do not include timely measures to help judge the success of planned actions.
- Governors rely too much on the information provided by school leaders. They are not rigorous in challenging pupils' low outcomes or checking that leaders' actions are improving the school rapidly enough.
- Actions taken by leaders have not led to consistently good teaching to help pupils reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders do not check how well pupils learn in the full range of subjects taught. This prevents them from gaining a full understanding of the effect of the school's curriculum.
- The curriculum is broad and varied. However, pupils do not study subjects in sufficient depth. Opportunities for them to apply their literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects are limited.
- Outcomes have declined since the last inspection. Last year, the standards achieved in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were low.
- The teaching of reading is not good. Strategies are not clear for developing pupils' comprehension skills.
- Teachers' use of assessment is not consistent. Consequently, tasks are not sufficiently challenging pupils to fully apply their knowledge and skills. This is particularly the case in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has a good knowledge about many of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There is determination to drive improvement.
- Children make a good start to their education. The early years provision is well led and helps children to make good progress.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are safe. Vulnerable pupils and their families are supported effectively.
- Pupils respect one another. They behave well at school and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that plans for improvement show how leaders and governors will measure the intended impact, particularly on pupils' outcomes
 - improving the skills of governors to challenge leaders further and check that information is accurate
 - identifying more clearly how well pupils achieve across a wide range of subjects
 - ensuring that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to study a range of subjects in depth and apply their literacy and mathematical skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - equipping teachers with better skills to teach reading
 - promoting assessment skills that ensure that pupils are challenged and moved on in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, changes in staffing and substantial building work have distracted leaders from sustaining high-quality teaching across the curriculum. Leaders were slow to identify the impact this had on pupils' progress. This led to a decline in standards in 2016 and 2017.
- Senior leaders do not have a clear overview of the quality of teaching across a range of subjects, including whole-school strengths and weaknesses. As a result, they are not in a position to ensure that teaching is consistently good across different subjects and year groups.
- Senior leaders' improvement plans correctly identify priorities and actions. The lack of measurable milestones hinders how well leaders can check the impact of their plans over time. This means that governors are not able to hold the school to account with sufficient urgency.
- Leaders do not track the progress pupils make in different subject areas and do not monitor some areas of the wider curriculum. Consequently, they do not know how well pupils achieve in a range of subjects.
- Aspects of the planned curriculum are not fully developed. The specific skills that pupils are expected to learn in different subjects lack depth, limiting pupils' knowledge and understanding. Opportunities for applying pupils' writing and numeracy skills are also underdeveloped. However, the use of specialist teachers supports the breadth of the curriculum in some subjects. This is particularly the case in French and music.
- Leaders' effective use of funding helps to ensure that good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The use of class teachers for interventions strengthens success because they are highly skilled and know the pupils well. The special educational needs coordinator has good knowledge of pupils' needs.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils was slow in 2017, but is now improving. The headteacher, as the pupil premium leader, has taken decisive action through more regular discussion with staff about pupils' needs and progress. Consequently, teachers have a greater awareness of how well disadvantaged pupils are doing. Pupils are closely monitored and benefit from the additional support provided through the funding. Disadvantaged pupils told inspectors that they feel their teachers know them well.
- Leaders have provided some effective training for staff to help them to improve the quality of their work. For example, training to support the quality of teaching in writing has been particularly successful. This has contributed towards a rapid improvement in the quality of pupils' written work.
- Leaders plan the use of the sport premium effectively. Pupils' participation in sport has improved and a wider range of clubs and activities are available for pupils. The school's effective promotion of active lifestyles and healthy choices

encourages pupils to carefully consider their personal fitness and well-being.

- The school's values, 'learning, loving, laughing', have pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at their heart. 'Value ambassadors' are effective in promoting how pupils should behave and work together. Links with a school in Uganda develop pupils' cultural awareness successfully. A good understanding of tolerance develops through reflections on differences and similarities between the school and other communities around the world. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Support for the school from the local authority has been good. Effective challenge has accelerated the rate of the school's improvement more recently. Targeted support for mathematics has been crucial and is beginning to contribute to improvements in teaching.

Governance

- Historically, governors have been slow in holding the school to account for declines in its performance. They have relied on the information provided by school leaders and have not been well organised to check progress effectively at the school for themselves. Training has not been effective enough in helping the governing body to perform to its full potential.
- An external review of governance has identified areas where skills need to develop. The governors are making use of the findings of this report to strengthen the challenge they provide to leaders. Their good understanding of data helps them to ask increasingly incisive questions of leaders.
- Governors are committed to helping the school to improve quickly. The visits they now make help them to better understand the priorities for improvement. They have a clearer understanding of leaders' effectiveness. However, they are not yet able to evaluate the school's improvement and rate of progress because leaders' plans do not contain timely measures.

Safeguarding

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders promote a strong safeguarding culture and maintain a high vigilance for keeping pupils safe. Organised systems support effective checking of the suitability of staff who work with children. Staff are well trained. Good induction policies ensure that all adults know what to do if they have concerns. Good relationships with external agencies, such as the Burwell Family Project, help to provide early help to vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Pupils have a good understanding of their personal safety. They understand what to do if they are worried and are confident that adults will help them. Pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe when online.
- An overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe that their children are safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, particularly in reading and mathematics. As a result, pupils' progress is not as rapid in these subjects. Some teachers do not use assessment well to check what pupils have already mastered. The work they plan does not challenge learning and pupils continue to practise skills they have already understood.
- The teaching of reading is not consistently good. Teachers do not develop pupils' reading comprehension skills well enough. The texts used by teachers sometimes lack depth. Consequently, the questions asked by teachers do not develop pupils' skills of inference and deduction well. The reading tasks used during reading lessons are not sufficiently challenging and pupils do not produce work to the standard of which they are capable. As one pupil shared with an inspector, 'The teacher does not ask me about the book I am reading. It is more difficult than the work we do together.'
- In mathematics, teaching is stronger where the school's chosen approach of mastery, 'say it, draw it, write it, apply it', helps pupils to break down and understand concepts effectively. Pupils confidently talk about the strategies they use to solve problems. Teachers have identified that pupils still have gaps in their knowledge in mathematics. Focused interventions are beginning to help some pupils to address misconceptions and accelerate their progress.
- Teachers have high expectations for the presentation of work in pupils' English and mathematics books. Pupils are developing their cursive handwriting style, and this is encouraged in their writing journals. However, teachers' expectations are not high for the presentation of pupils' work in other subjects.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils respond quickly to adult direction and this helps to sustain their levels of concentration. Pupils only become fidgety when tasks set by teachers do not interest them or where they are unable to access the work in hand.
- A clear, structured approach to the teaching of writing is accelerating pupils' progress. The understanding of grammar is well taught and applied to writing for a range of purposes. For example, 'shades of meaning' help pupils to select different grammar for use in their compositions. Starting with talk, pupils experiment with words and phrases and apply them to different contexts.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is highly effective. Children use their knowledge of letters and sounds effectively to support their early reading and writing skills. In key stage 1, teachers skilfully build on pupils' understanding by providing opportunities for them to use their phonics skills to recognise and use more complex spelling combinations.
- Teaching assistants are often well deployed, especially where they support pupils who have fallen behind to catch up with their peers. They typically use questioning sensitively so that pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. For example, in a Year 6 class the gentle probing from a teaching assistant helped a group of girls to tackle mathematical problems with confidence.
- Where teachers have good specialist subject knowledge, work they set typically

provides pupils with stimulating and challenging tasks. For example, in both French and music, the creative use of resources provides pupils with rich experiences and enables them to quickly become immersed in 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 proud of their school. They talk enthusiastically about the opportunities for trips and participation in clubs and sporting events. The awarding of recognition badges to mark pupils' achievements promotes a sense of community and belonging. Pupils wear their badges with pride and confidently explain how they earned them.
- The pastoral support provided by the school is a strength. Pupils understand the golden rules and the consequences of breaking them. They understand that any kind of bullying is wrong. Pupils say that this rarely happens at their school but they know that adults will support them. Pupils told inspectors, 'Everyone is treated equally.' School leaders are knowledgeable about pupils who may be vulnerable. They work well with families to promote their welfare.
- Pupils respect each other. The school council enables pupils to make decisions to improve the environment. This teaches them about the key British value of democracy and the rule of law. Pupils are responsible for raising money for charities. This promotes respect for, and tolerance of, people facing challenges different from their own in an effective manner.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour is good in lessons because pupils listen to adults' directions and respond promptly. They manage their own behaviour well and show enthusiasm at the start of lessons. Some pupils become disengaged when activities are too easy. Pupils respect the new school building. They move around the school in a calm and orderly manner.
- Pupils behave well at lunchtime because they respect the adults deployed to look after them. They have plenty of activities to keep them occupied.
- Pupils' overall attendance is currently above the national average. During the current academic year, pupils' persistent absence rates continue to reduce. Leaders monitor attendance and checks are made to ensure that disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly, to support the progress they make.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016 and in 2017, the proportion of pupils at key stage 2 who reached the expected standard in reading and mathematics was below the national average. For the same period, it was higher than the national average in reading, writing and maths combined for the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standard. Too few pupils make good progress during key stage 2. As a result, they are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they could be.
- Pupils' progress has been slow in mathematics, particularly at key stage 2. However, work in current key stage 2 books shows that recent improvements are starting to make a positive impact. Pupils are becoming increasingly fluent in their recall of number bonds. However, pupils' progress remains weaker where tasks are insufficiently challenging.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils requires improvement. Historically, some of these pupils have made weak progress. Leaders have started to take action by making sure that teachers know who the disadvantaged pupils are in their classes. Earlier intervention is beginning to improve the progress that pupils make.
- Progress for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving. Leaders are checking the support that pupils are receiving through regular progress meetings. Interventions meet the specific needs of pupils so that they achieve well from their starting points.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils at the end of key stage 1 who attained both the expected and greater depth standards was below the national average for reading and writing. Starting points for this year group were low. Their progress across key stage 1 was not consistently good. Leaders have responded by ensuring that teaching is stronger for this year group of pupils in Year 3. Consequently, they are making better progress. Evidence seen in English books for current key stage 1 pupils shows that progress is beginning to accelerate.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the required score in the 2017 Year 1 phonics screening check was higher than the national average. The teaching of phonics is effective and the school's current information is indicating that the proportion of pupils likely to meet the required score will continue to improve. Teaching of early reading skills supports pupils' confidence in reading. However, progress in reading for older pupils is slower, owing to teachers' lack of understanding about how to teach more complex reading skills.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader has high expectations and provides clear direction for planning activities to meet children's different areas of development. All staff are undertaking higher-level training so that they make effective contributions to the provision. Consequently, children achieve well across the curriculum.
- Children join Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age. In the prime areas of learning, some children's communication and speaking skills are below those typically expected. Programmes selected for these children

accelerate their progress. When children leave the Reception class, their good level of development is above the national average. This demonstrates good progress from their starting points and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

- Adults encourage children through questioning. Children exhibit a high level of independence. Activities excite children, stimulating their learning. For example, some children were finding dominoes around the class that had matching numbers. They had to record these on charts and then talk about the numbers they found, reinforcing number recognition and counting skills.
- Learning journeys provide accurate assessments of children's progress. The work in books demonstrates how next steps are identified and achieved. Children are proud of their work and talk with confidence about their activities. For example, two girls produced their shopping lists, making plausible words from their knowledge of blending sounds. They had even attempted their own Chinese script during a project about China.
- Boys' development is a key focus for the provision. Interesting activities engage their attention. For example, their alien paintings depicted creatures from their recent topic about a spaceship landing in the school field.
- Children behave well. They work cooperatively, sharing ideas or taking turns. The outdoors makes an effective contribution to their social development and developing their curiosity. Resources encourage creative thinking to solve problems, such as by using tyres and wooden planks.
- Parents attend weekly sessions to share information about their child. Where this is not possible, effective communication is made electronically. Regular updates provide information about how to support children at home.
- Children learn in a safe and nurturing environment. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are effective. All appropriate checks are in place.

School details

Unique reference number	110758
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10041783

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

Type of school	All-through Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Davyd Andrews
Headteacher	Nicholas Smith
Telephone number	01638 613103
Website	www.burwellvillage.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	office@burwellvillage.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are three classes in Reception, Year 2 and Year 5. There are two classes in Year 1, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 6.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of key stage 2.
- The school has had building work, expanding the number of classrooms, since the last inspection. There are other community facilities on site, such as a public library and a sports hall.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning across all classes, and at times, jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors reviewed a range of pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, phase leaders, the assessment leader, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including information relating to safeguarding, behaviour logs, attendance information and the school's own reports regarding teaching and learning.
- An inspector met a group of governors and held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- Discussions were held with groups of selected pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and asked them questions about their reading.
- Responses from 87 parents and carers to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 84 free-text responses from parents were analysed. An inspector gathered pupils' views and informally met parents as they arrived at school in the morning.
- The inspectors examined 35 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Aykin

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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