

Inspection of a good school: Burghill Community Academy

Burghill, Hereford, Herefordshire HR4 7RP

Inspection dates:

17 December 2019

Outcome

Burghill Community Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming, inclusive and happy school. Staff work hard to ensure that they get the best out of every child. Leaders' expectations are high. A 'can-do' attitude fills the school.

Pupils feel well cared for and safe. They are happy to talk to any adult if they are worried. They do not feel there is any bullying. Pupils themselves often resolve any minor disputes which arise. If a problem persists, they ask an adult for help and it is sorted quickly.

Pupils are polite and well behaved. Lessons run smoothly and are not disrupted. This is because pupils respect and readily help each other. Where pupils miss a lesson, other pupils explain what they have to do to help them catch up. This means no one falls behind.

Parents are supportive and full of praise for school staff. As one parent put it, 'I can't praise the school enough!' They particularly appreciate the changes introduced since the new headteacher joined the school. Weekly parent assemblies are well attended.

Community links are strong. Pupils sing at local events. The dedicated and active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) raises valuable funds to support developments, trips and resources, for example a school minibus.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children in the early years get off to a flying start in the pre-school and Reception class. They learn to listen to adults and to take turns when using equipment. Songs and rhymes help develop children's language skills. Regular outdoor activities ensure that children thrive physically. Parents are encouraged to support their children from the outset. A large number of parents attended the pre-school nativity, which was on during the inspection.

Leaders' efforts to refine the curriculum are paying off. Pupils enjoy learning about a wide

range of subjects, and enjoy learning across them. The curriculum is suitably challenging and builds on pupils' interests. This enables pupils to achieve well. For example, many pupils learn to play musical instruments, and older pupils are able to speak French. Pupils' art work is a strength. Impressive William Morris pieces are displayed in school. Physical Education (PE) is also planned and delivered well. Sports competitions and clubs contribute to pupils' physical well-being.

Curriculum plans have been carefully planned out in all subjects. However, leaders are already aware that they need adjusting in some subjects to enable pupils to know more and remember more. For example, history lessons often have a literacy focus and do not develop pupils' historical knowledge. Pupils are unsure about the importance of history or how it has shaped modern living. This is because links are not clear. Staff know that plans need redrafting to achieve this.

Most pupils read well. A passion for reading is promoted well by teachers. As avid readers themselves, they read stories to pupils and build in time every day for pupils to read. Phonics lessons start in pre-school and carry on into key stage 1. Pupils who find reading difficult get extra help from well-trained staff. A well-stocked library and reading areas in classrooms provide a range of books. These are well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils complete quizzes about books they read to check their understanding.

Pupils use different styles and write for different purposes in many subjects. Teachers plan tasks which build successfully on pupils' prior skills. Visits and experiences successfully motivate pupils to write. Pupils are imaginative and can give detailed descriptions. However, too many pupils struggle with spelling. Common, everyday words continue to be misspelled. This is because they are not picked up by adults and pupils are not given spelling strategies to help them.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support. This enables them to access the same curriculum and opportunities as other pupils. Specialist help and equipment are provided when needed for individual pupils.

Staff report that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload. Teachers appreciate being involved in planning the curriculum. Staff report that leaders support them well in their work and listen to their views.

Behaviour is excellent. As a result, lessons progress without disruption. All pupils play and work together happily. The buddy system makes sure everyone has a friend to turn to.

Pupils get lots of opportunities to grow and develop their confidence. These include involvement in school plays, community events and taking on additional jobs. Memorable visits, visitors and clubs all make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils know about different religions and other cultures. They are respectful and friendly towards new pupils. Their well-rounded education ensures that they are fully prepared for life at secondary school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take pupils' safety very seriously. Staff are well trained. They know what to do if they have any worries about pupils. These concerns are followed up swiftly by leaders. Parents are contacted, and advice is sought from appropriate authorities. However, on occasion, the outcome of these discussions is not shown on the incidents log.

Governors fulfil their duties and parents have confidence in the school's safety routines. Pupils are regularly taught about personal safety. They know the dangers of sharing their details online. Pupils know that adults will listen to them and help them if they are anxious about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Long-term and medium-term plans have been carefully designed to build pupils' skills and knowledge over time in all areas of the curriculum. In many subjects, pupils already have a good grounding and wide range of skills, for example reading, art and PE. However, some subjects, such as history, veer into being English lessons and subject knowledge and skills are diluted. Leaders need to check that all levels of planning build towards pupils knowing and remembering more.
- The work in pupils' books shows that pupils can write at length and in different styles. They have a good grasp of vocabulary and punctuation. However, pupils' spelling is weak. They learn lists of spellings but do not apply words learned to their writing or put them into context. Teachers should address any common errors or misconceptions as soon as they arise so that they are not carried forward year-on-year.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective. Leaders follow up any concerns with parents or local authority agencies. However, on a small number of occasions, discussions held are not recorded on the school's documentation. It is therefore unclear if further action is needed. Leaders should ensure that all follow-up actions are logged on records for individual pupils.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Burghill Community Academy to be good in March 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	139608
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10131189
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	Board of Trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Littlewood
Headteacher	Alex Davies
Website	www.burghill.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a stand-alone academy.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2018. He is also headteacher at Stretton Sugwas C of E Academy. This is another small local school. The headteacher divides his time between both schools.
- The deputy headteacher leads the school when the headteacher is not present.
- A pre-school, Muddy Boots, was opened in January 2017. This provides care and education for two- to four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- We looked closely at reading, writing and history during the inspection. We met with senior leaders and curriculum leaders, considered pupils' workbooks, conducted lesson visits and spoke with teachers and pupils.

- We met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- We met with the special educational needs coordinator and safeguarding leader. The school's single central record was checked.
- We observed senior leaders hearing pupils read.
- We met with several parents at the end of the school day. We also considered responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupils' survey, but inspectors gathered pupils' views both formally and informally during the school day.
- We considered documents provided by the school, including reports from external bodies, details about curriculum planning and the school's action plan and self-evaluation. Attendance and behaviour information was also checked, alongside the school's website.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Derek Barnes

Ofsted Inspector

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