

Inspection of a good school: Burrsville Infant Academy

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

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Burrsville Infant Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love learning at Burrsville and enjoy the subjects they are taught in class. They especially like the visits they go on to places, like Colchester Castle, which help them learn even more. From the start of Reception, children learn independence and the routines of school. Pupils work hard to reach the high expectations staff have of them. They particularly like teachers challenging them to read new books.

Pupils feel happy, are safe, and are well-looked after. They know there are adults they can talk to if they are worried. They also know that adults will help them to sort out any problems they have. Pupils also look after each other and play well together. They show respect for each other and celebrate each other's differences. Older pupils enjoy being 'playground pals' and take this responsibility very seriously. They make sure all pupils have games and someone to play with during lunchtime. Pupils enjoy their lunchtimes. One pupil commented that the dining hall was like 'being in a restaurant'. Pupils behave well at school. Bullying is very rare. If it does happen, adults quickly deal with it.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, which sets out the knowledge pupils need to know and remember. In reading and mathematics, the curriculum is precisely broken down into the order in which it needs to be taught. This means that pupils have opportunities to build on what they already know and revisit important topics and themes. For example, teachers use consolidation weeks in mathematics to go over content which pupils have found difficult. In other subjects, however, the curriculum does not set out the precise order in which knowledge is to be learned. It also does not identify which knowledge needs to be revisited in order to secure pupils' understanding. This means that, while pupils have a secure knowledge of individual topics, they do not always make connections between their learning. For example, being able to link different events in history.

Children in the early years are taught to read as soon as they join the school. This helps them quickly develop their understanding of the sounds letters make. Phonics sessions across the school are effective in teaching children to become fluent readers. Shared reading sessions introduce pupils to a range of different stories. Pupils enjoy having 'love of reading' books, which they read alongside their phonics book. Teachers quickly identify any pupil who finds reading hard. They then receive the support they need to become more fluent.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as everyone else. The special educational needs coordinator supports staff to identify what the needs are of pupils with SEND. These pupils then receive targeted support to help them to do well.

Staff consistently manage behaviour well. They have high expectations of all pupils. Children in the early years are taught to manage their feelings and emotions. They develop independence through well-considered activities throughout the school day. These activities also support children to achieve well in all areas of the early years foundation stage curriculum. Pupils who require extra support to manage their feelings receive this from well-trained staff.

Leaders have designed a range of ways to provide pupils with different experiences. The '7 before 7' programme gives pupils opportunities to experience things, like camping out on the school field. Trips are used to further enhance pupils' learning in the classroom. A range of diverse stories from other cultures is used in class and during assemblies. Pupils are very thoughtful about anyone who is different to them. They know the importance of treating each other with respect.

There have been several staff changes recently. Leaders have supported new colleagues with effective training to help them teach the planned curriculum. Some work remains with training leaders who are new to their roles in monitoring the quality of education. Consequently, this means that some subject leaders are not as secure in supporting class teachers to achieve the high expectations set by senior leaders.

Leaders work very effectively with parents, who are appreciative of the high-quality support the school provides. Trustees have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. Local governors and the trust cluster board hold leaders to account well. Staff are very positive about the school. They feel proud to be a part of Burrsville and appreciate the support they receive from leaders to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They report any concerns they have quickly. Leaders keep detailed records of all concerns raised. They ensure that they put support in place for pupils and families who need help. This includes seeking extra help from other professionals. All required pre-employment checks are carried out on new staff in the school.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. The curriculum teaches pupils about online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Planning in foundation subjects sets out the knowledge pupils need to know. However, it does not stipulate the precise order in which it needs to be taught or when key concepts need to be revisited. This means there are not enough opportunities for pupils to build on what they already know or make links with prior learning. Leaders must clearly set out the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn in a logical order, so that pupils deepen their learning in all subjects.
- There have been significant staff changes, including in leadership roles. Senior leaders must ensure that all leaders know how to accurately monitor the quality of education in their subjects. They must then ensure that subject leaders are better able to support senior leaders' high expectations for the quality of education.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 2 and 3 November 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	139808
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10200307
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Robert
Headteacher	Katie Siggery
Website	www.burrsvilleinfantacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Reach2 multi-academy trust.
- There is a local governing body with some powers delegated to it.
- There have been several changes to staff and leadership positions since the previous inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- There is a nursery on the school site run by an external provider.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks of adults at the school, and a sample of child protection files. The inspector also spoke with governors, leaders, the designated safeguarding lead and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, subject leaders, staff, governors, the deputy director of education for the trust and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, pupil records, minutes of governor body and trust meetings, school improvement visit notes, school improvement plans and school policies.
- There were 49 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside 33 free-text responses.
- There were no responses to the pupil survey. The inspector spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- There were 30 responses to the staff survey. The inspector also spoke with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Michael Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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