

Inspection of Burman Infant School

Velsheda Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 2JW

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

The school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

'We make sure that everyone is included and that no one gets missed out' is how pupils describe life at Burman Infant School. Pupils are happy and chatty. They laugh and play together cheerfully at playtimes. They are respectful to staff and each other. Pupils feel safe in school because they know that adults are there to look after them.

The behaviour of pupils in school is calm and orderly. They listen carefully in lessons and follow the school rules. They behave well and strive to reach the 'gold zone' to achieve the rewards offered. Pupils know that bullying is 'being mean to others lots of times.' They know that it is wrong and that staff will resolve it quickly.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn lots of different subjects. However, plans in some subjects have not yet been sequenced clearly enough. A few subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not checked that pupils build their knowledge up gradually or remember important words.

Pupils enjoy the recently introduced forest school lessons. They learn important outdoor skills in these lessons. Pupils also enjoy going on school trips, especially when they get to travel on a double-decker bus.

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

The leadership team has changed within the last two years. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to post. They have a clear vision that is shared by staff. A few subject leaders are in their first year of leading their subject. Consequently, staff knowledge and expertise need further development to drive the necessary curriculum improvements.

Leaders have begun to review the curriculum, especially reading, writing and mathematics. There has been recent improvement in mathematics, with signs that outcomes are rising. However, there are still deficiencies in the English curriculum in some parts of the school.

Leaders have invested in commercial schemes in a small number of other subjects. These programmes provide a clear and well-sequenced structure for teachers to follow. However, in other subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge or subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to know. This includes in the early years. The order in which knowledge is taught has not been considered carefully enough to ensure that pupils build their knowledge steadily, and can remember it, from Nursery through to Year 2.

Reading is a priority. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' love of reading and encouraging them to read daily. Staff have received appropriate training to deliver the new phonics programme successfully. They have strong subject

knowledge. In addition to phonic lessons, staff hear every pupil read at least once a week. Leaders have invested in some online phonic books, which pupils can read at home with parents. However, many pupils who are lower attaining, disadvantaged or are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not access these books. Additionally, their reading books do not consistently match the sounds they learn in class. While these pupils do receive some additional reading support in school, leaders have not ensured that the reading support provided is helping pupils to catch up quickly.

Staff identify pupils with SEND early. Leaders ensure that most pupils receive the support they need to meet their needs. Leaders access specialist support for those with complex needs. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school, although few choose to attend after-school clubs.

Children in the early years get off to a good start in their education, although the curriculum is not as well sequenced as it could be. High expectations of behaviour are set from day one. Children take turns and share equipment well. They enjoy using the wide range of resources provided to be creative and imaginative.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They are keen to learn. Staff manage behaviour well, so low-level disruption rarely happens. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.

Pupils learn about different faiths. They have an age-appropriate understanding of a range of religions. They can name different holy days and places of worship. They enjoy learning about other festivals. Pupils appreciate differences, respect others and know that they should treat everyone equally.

Pupils enjoy school trips and enrichment activities, such as bird watching. There are football, dance and drama clubs after school. Those who attend enjoy these opportunities. Pupils readily take on additional roles, such as school councillor or reading champion. This helps to develop their maturity and levels of responsibility.

Governors are developing their expertise in holding all leaders to account. However, they do not challenge robustly enough. Governors have not focused sufficiently on curriculum development in recent years.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training and know how to recognise signs of potential abuse. Staff are vigilant and know how to report concerns. Leaders seek appropriate advice and support, when needed, to ensure that pupils are not at risk of harm. Leaders complete the necessary checks when recruiting new members of staff.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They learn about healthy relationships and how to be safe online. Pupils understand the importance of talking to an adult if they are being hurt by anyone. They are confident to speak to staff in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have faced significant financial challenge in ensuring that all reading books match the sounds that pupils learn. As a result, pupils take home some books that they cannot decode. In addition, leaders have not ensured that the lowest attainers, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND receive the support needed to master the necessary skills. Consequently, some pupils do not make the progress they should. Leaders need to ensure that all reading books match pupils' phonic ability and that pupils who struggle receive the support they need to catch up quickly.
- The curriculum is not planned coherently or sequenced well in some subjects. Leaders have not identified the key vocabulary that they want pupils to know and remember. This reduces pupils' ability to build and retain important knowledge and skills. Leaders should ensure that all of the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge progressively from Nursery to Year 2 and that subject vocabulary is included.
- A few subject leaders are new to their roles and are inexperienced. They do not yet have the expertise to evaluate the curriculum or identify where greater support is needed for staff and pupils in their subject. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the support, knowledge and expertise needed to evaluate their curriculum areas effectively and identify where further support is needed for staff and pupils.
- Governors have not focused enough on curriculum development in recent years. This has led to the curriculum not being as effective as it should be so that pupils receive a good quality of education. Governors should challenge leaders more robustly to bring about the improvements needed.

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.

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	104040
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10256875
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Rick Horton
Headteacher	Ella Saxty
Website	www.burman.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 May 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2021, having previously been deputy headteacher at the school. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. Meetings were also held with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics and science. Inspection activities in these subjects included: meeting with curriculum leaders, lesson visits, discussion with staff and pupils, sampling pupils' work and listening to pupils read. Inspectors also reviewed curriculum documentation for other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the school's designated lead for safeguarding to check the effectiveness of the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Other documentation reviewed included that relating to safeguarding, governance, recruitment, behaviour, suspensions, attendance, SEND and the use of the pupil premium.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and their welfare.
- Inspectors talked informally to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to the Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View. The lead inspector also considered evidence provided by parents through telephone discussions during the inspection. Inspectors reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered their views on site.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindsay Nash

Ofsted Inspector

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