

# Inspection of Burghfield St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Theale Road, Burghfield Village, Reading, Berkshire RG30 3TX

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils thrive at this caring and kind community school. Leaders have established a caring ethos, where high expectations are set for both pupils' academic development and their personal growth. As a result, pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning and achieve well.

Relationships between pupils are exceptional. A large proportion of pupils come from families who work in the armed forces and have had to change schools several times. Despite the challenges that this brings, pupils are made to feel welcome, and very quickly develop a palpable sense of belonging. They benefit from a well-thought-out personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, which helps them develop an understanding of differences. As one parent reported to inspectors, 'The school has an excellent sense of community, with children of all ages pulling together, respecting and looking out for each other.' Consequently, pupils are highly motivated in what is an overwhelmingly positive, nurturing, and respectful school culture.

Behaviour is excellent. There is no interruption to lessons and at breaktimes pupils play together harmoniously. Bullying is not tolerated at all. Pupils feel like they can tell someone if they have any concerns and rightly trust that staff will take swift action where necessary.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. Children get off to a great start in the early years. Leaders have identified clearly the important knowledge that they want pupils to know, and have carefully sequenced it, from Reception through to Year 6. This ensures that pupils' knowledge builds over time and supports teachers to know exactly what to teach and when.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new content with clarity. Resources are used effectively to help pupils to understand new concepts. Teachers choose appropriate activities to embed new knowledge and pupils benefit from regular recapping of prior learning. Children in Reception enjoy a rich environment, with numerous well-thought-out opportunities that help them to deepen their knowledge. Early identification of any additional needs, alongside thoughtful adaptations where appropriate, means that all pupils achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In a small minority of subjects, the work given to pupils does not support them as well to achieve the ambitious end points set out in the curriculum.

Assessment is used particularly well. Staff use a variety of methods to accurately identify what pupils do and do not know. Consequently, leaders have accurate

oversight of pupils' progress and achievement across the curriculum, and teachers are able to continually adapt teaching to address gaps in knowledge. Reading is prioritised. A rigorous and systematic approach to teaching phonics is well embedded. Books given to pupils are well matched to the sounds they know. If pupils ever need help to catch up, staff provide effective support. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often, and proudly show off their 'reading diaries'. As a result, all pupils develop increasing confidence and fluency in their reading.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They develop a good understanding of citizenship and have a confident grasp of the fundamental British values of democracy and the rule of law. Leaders have invested in pastoral care, which ensures that pupils get the emotional and social support that they need. This is especially appreciated by pupils from service families. Personal development starts in the early years, where children are quickly absorbed into the extra-curricular offer, including taking part in singing performances. The school's range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents, or take part in competitive sport, has been adversely affected by the pandemic and recent staff turnover. Leaders know this and have ambitious plans to reinvigorate their offer.

Behaviour and attitudes are exceptional. Both leaders and pupils play active roles in modelling positive behaviour. This includes weekly awards assemblies, led by pupils, and attended by parents, where the school community comes together to recognise and reward those who have exemplified the school's values. As one parent told inspectors, 'whilst we are overjoyed with our daughter's academic progress, we are happiest that she is a valued and included part of the school community, supported, and cared for by peers and older children who are true role models.'

Leadership is a strength of this school. Stakeholders rightly recognise and commend leaders for their dedication and commitment. Leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school and work well together to ensure their improvement plans are realised. Staff value their professional development and are proud to work for the school. Leaders take a considerate approach to managing teacher's workloads.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff complete regular safeguarding training. This empowers them to be able to identify and spot any signs of harm. Their training ensures they are all confident on what they need to do to report and how to record any concerns. Leaders have implemented robust systems to oversee and manage safeguarding. They work with pupils, families and, where appropriate, external agencies to secure the help that pupils need.

Pupils benefit from a structured PSHE curriculum. They learn about healthy relationships, how to keep themselves safe online and how to get help if they need it.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the work given to pupils does not enable them to reach the ambitious end points outlined in the school's curriculum. This means that they do not learn as well as they could do. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge they need to ensure that learning builds systematically on what pupils know.
- The school's offer of extra-curricular clubs and sport has been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent turnover in staff. This means that pupils do not currently benefit from a broad range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Leaders should ensure they implement their plans to re-establish and reinvigorate their wider curriculum offer.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109956
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256396
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Joanne Lambdon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Antony Gallagher
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.burghfield.w-berks.sch.uk">www.burghfield.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15th November 2017

## Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the school was not using any alternative provision.
- A significant proportion of the school's cohort are from families serving in the armed forces.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Oxford. Its last inspection of its religious character under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2019.

## 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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.

- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and physical education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered 119 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leaders, spoke with pupils and staff, checked the school's records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school, and spoke with governors.
- Inspectors met with the school special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.

### **Inspection team**

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Francesca Arocas

Ofsted Inspector

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