

Inspection of Burwash CofE School

School Hill, Burwash, Etchingam, East Sussex TN19 7DZ

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since October 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's vision of 'caring children, loving learning' is fully realised. Pupils are deeply engaged and motivated in class and love learning. They receive the very best start to their educational journey. The school have created a highly ambitious curriculum that inspires children to become inquisitive and independent learners who are curious about the world around them. Consequently, pupils achieve highly, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are highly focused in lessons. Relationships are warm and respectful, and pupils look after each other at social times. They have an excellent understanding of the school rules and how they link closely to the fundamental British values. Attendance is high as pupils want to be in school. Pupils feel safe and know they can go to staff for help with any worries they may have.

Pupils benefit from an excellent range of well-considered trips and experiences that link carefully to the curriculum they are studying. They look forward to the many opportunities to perform plays and to sing in the community. Pupils are proud that they sponsor a school in Malawi and love finding out about life in another country. As a result, pupils develop a profound sense of the world in which they live.

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

The school has created a unique and bespoke curriculum. It is highly ambitious. The curriculum maps out the precise knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. Teachers have identified the exact vocabulary that pupils need to be able to use and understand from early years through to Year 6. Pupils have many opportunities to routinely revisit prior learning. As a result, their knowledge and understanding across different subjects is impressive. Pupils can use the content they have learned to create well-structured arguments, for example, when debating whether tourism is a good or bad. Their knowledge of computing is first rate, and the curriculum inspires pupils to continue learning outside of school.

Staff precisely check pupils' recall and understanding. They use this information to ensure that misconceptions are identified quickly and that effective support is put into place. Pupils with SEND are supported by expert staff who ensure that the curriculum is accessible and based on the next step of learning. Teachers accurately identify those in need of support.

Children in early years make an excellent start to their education. Staff have expertly crafted a curriculum that is engaging and interesting. There is a strong focus on developing children's vocabulary and skills to talk with confidence. Children learn a rich breadth of language, which they use in their learning and discussions with their teachers and friends. Highly trained staff support learning effectively and enable all children, including those with SEND, to access the ambitious curriculum. Children are helped to become independent learners, so they are ready for their next stage of education.

Pupils are taught to read accurately and with fluency. Children in early years experience a language-rich environment that is filled with stories, poems and rhymes. Staff teach phonics with precision, and books are well matched to the sounds that pupils are learning. Routine checks ensure that pupils do not fall behind, and well-considered support enables pupils to become confident readers. Older pupils love reading stories, and they enjoy the many books that are chosen to deliberately enrich their learning in other subjects.

All staff have the highest expectations of behaviour, and pupils' conduct is exemplary. Warm and positive relationships between everyone are in abundance. Pupils are exceptionally well mannered and polite. They care deeply for their friends and develop very positive attitudes to their education. Pupils' attendance overall is above the national average, and this has improved substantially in recent years. The attendance of a small proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is not yet as high as the rest of the school.

The personal development of pupils is highly effective. Pupils demonstrate exceptionally inclusive attitudes to each other and a well-developed understanding of commonalities and difference. They are supported to develop a particularly strong moral understanding. Staff ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep healthy and active. This is further enriched through forest school and outdoor learning opportunities. The school ensures that individual talents are nurtured and that pupils have the chance to share those interests with others.

All leaders, including governors, are highly ambitious for the pupils in their school. They support staff's well-being and workload very effectively. As a result, staff are effusive in their praise of leaders. Staff also have a strong sense of belonging and feel valued. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is constantly being refined for the benefit of pupils and well-considered training supports skilled staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	114492
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10296187
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	Jan McKeever
Headteacher	Debbie Gilbert
Website	www.burwash.e-sussex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 October 2011

Information about this school

- The school is a church of England school in the diocese of Chichester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2017.
- The school currently does not use any alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. An inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the subject leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents that was provided by the school and observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- The inspectors evaluated evidence from a range of other curriculum areas, including science, history and computing.
- An inspector met with members of the governing board and a representative from the Chichester diocese.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents that were shared through Ofsted Parent View.
- The views of staff were gathered through surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including during classroom visits and at playtimes and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
James Stuart	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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