



# Burston Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120793  
**Local Authority** NORFOLK  
**Inspection number** 291859  
**Inspection dates** 20–21 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Helen Ranger

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Crown Green
<b>School category</b>	Community		Burston, Burston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Diss, Norfolk IP22 5TZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01379741256
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	63	<b>Fax number</b>	01379741256
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr.Keith Ambrose
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Sue Cooke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–11	20–21 September 2006	291859

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small school serves the village of Burston, although children attend from a much wider area. This is partly because some parents choose this school when their children have not settled well elsewhere. As a result, mobility rates into the school are quite high, especially in Years 3 to 6. Almost all pupils are from White British families and speak English as their first or main language. An average proportion of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Since April 2006, the school has been in a formal partnership with nearby Tivetshall Community Primary School, with the headteacher leading the staff of both schools.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school's view that it provides a good all round education for its pupils is quite right. Its popularity with parents sums this up, typified by the one who wrote, 'The really positive atmosphere and energy of the staff encourage the children highly'. Children begin school with a typical range of skills for their age. They get a good start to all aspects of school in the Reception class, reaching at least the expected levels by the time they start Year 1, and often exceeding them. From then through to Year 6 they achieve well. When they are assessed in Year 2 and Year 6, their standards are mostly above average and represent good progress. Standards in reading are particularly high, but writing standards are lower than they should be. The action to improve writing has been partly successful, but more remains to be done to develop this key skill. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school and are given many opportunities to develop maturity and independence, which they respond to extremely well. They behave very well in lessons and the playground and form strong relationships. The older ones correctly say that they 'look out for the little ones'. Pupils have a very good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles. The pupils contribute to the community exceptionally well. They are enterprising and organise many events both in school and in the local community. The combination of their effective academic and social skills gives them a good grounding for the next stage of their education and for their later economic well-being. The school is successful because of good leadership and management. The staff work as an effective team under the very good leadership of the headteacher. A good curriculum is taught well in all age groups and pupils have access to a wide range of very enjoyable extra activities. This is commendable for such a small school and the partnership with Tivetshall School has led to even more opportunities being provided. The staff and governors work effectively together with the overall well-being of the pupils at the centre of their work. Pupils are cared for and guided well in both their work and personal development. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and has a clear vision of how it wishes to develop in the future. The headteacher uses the expertise of her staff well and has enabled them to play a full part in the drive to raise standards further and continue to provide well for pupils. The tracking of pupils' achievements is not sufficiently rigorous at assessing individual attainment when pupils are first admitted to the school to act as a useful guide for checking how well they do subsequently. Parents mostly speak very highly of their children's experiences at school, although they rightly feel that improved written communications between home and school would help them to support their children even more. This is already a priority identified by the governors, who are currently considering how to develop this partnership. The school has continued to improve well since its last inspection. With its current team of staff and governors and the valued support of the parents, it is well placed to continue to provide good quality education for this community.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing across all subjects, including attention to how pupils' written work is presented.
- Improve communications between home and school, so

that parents can play a fuller part in supporting their children's learning. - Ensure that pupils' levels of attainment are established whenever they are admitted, so that their progress can be tracked and supported more fully.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

A few factors need to be considered when judging pupils' achievement because this school is very small in national terms. Small variations in each age group can make a big difference to how overall performance compares with national or local authority averages. The school also admits pupils who have some ground to make up, because they have moved from schools abroad or from schools where they have not thrived. Pupils achieve well, including those with particular learning or emotional needs. The oldest pupils have generally reached above average standards in recent years and have met most of the challenging targets set for them. Their results in the 2006 national tests continue this good trend, with a high proportion reaching Level 5 in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils are also good listeners and most are articulate and confident speakers. Writing was an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. While most pupils make satisfactory progress in writing, some underachievement still remains. Pupils need to be able to write more effectively across the full range of subjects and to present their work more tidily with well formed handwriting.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, is outstanding. Attendance is consistently high and there is very little lateness. Pupils are very proud of their school and have very positive attitudes to learning. While most live in quite sparsely populated rural areas, they are open to and respectful of other lifestyles and cultures, such as when they welcomed a Russian musician and a visitor to talk about the Jewish faith. They express their views well, for example via the school council, and know that these are valued. They have contributed to changes such as improving cloakroom decor, planning improvements to the playground and organising events such as a 'book week'. They are very aware of important environmental issues. They are developing an excellent awareness of how to stay safe, such as when using the Internet or when faced daily with the dangers from heavy industrial traffic through the village. They have a very good awareness of the social and physical benefits of a healthy lifestyle, although a few are yet to commit themselves fully to a healthier diet. Although their writing skills need to be better, their otherwise good academic and social skills give them very secure foundations for their adult lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and the main reason why pupils achieve well. Teachers cater efficiently for the wide range of ages and attainments in each class. They are supported well by the able team of teaching assistants, who make a real difference, particularly to the Reception children and pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The system of teaching pupils in Years 3 to 6 according to teachers' subject strengths is effective and pupils enjoy the variety it gives. The school makes very good use of well qualified sports coaches to enable pupils to learn an impressive range of skills, for example, in swimming, rugby and football. Teachers are working hard to improve writing standards but have not yet established consistently high expectations of how pupils set out and present their work. There are good systems for assessing pupils' work and setting further targets, especially in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum that promotes good progress. It is planned well in line with national guidance and takes full account of the mixed age groups in each class. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs and have very good opportunities to take part in competitive sports and residential and day trips, including one to France to practise the French they have learned. They have established their own large garden and are enjoying the food they produce there. Very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education encourages pupils to stay healthy and safe. They are given many opportunities to become responsible young citizens which they relish. Since the last inspection the accommodation has been extensively improved, but there is still no hall. The school makes the best possible use of the local church for indoor physical activities, but this is far from ideal.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils and their parents correctly believe that the quality of care, guidance and support is good. Pupils greatly appreciate the relationships they have with adults in the school and how their work and efforts are valued. Staff and governors pay careful attention to children's welfare. Child protection and other health and safety procedures are rigorously established. The good links with parents and the local area mean that pupils feel an important part of a large school and community 'family'. The arrangements for tracking and supporting pupils' academic and personal achievements help to guide their overall development well. These arrangements would be enhanced if more detailed information about children's starting points in the school could be used to measure their progress even more effectively.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides energetic and thoughtful leadership and is well respected by pupils, staff, governors and parents. She has adapted well to her changing role as head of two schools and has ensured that the arrangement has many benefits for Burston pupils. The school also benefits from productive partnerships with other local schools and churches. The headteacher and staff are supported well by active and well informed governors who carry out their role of 'critical friends' efficiently, for instance, when deciding whether to support the partnership with Tivetshall. Staff and governors regularly check how well the school and its pupils are doing. All teachers and support staff contribute well to the school's self-evaluation and to the action taken to implement initiatives. The governors are currently gathering parents' opinions more systematically and intend to use these when determining how the school develops. The written development plan is comprehensive and used well by staff and governors. It would benefit from clearer identification of which are the most important or urgent priorities and how these will be monitored by the governors.





## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

22 September 2006 Dear Children, Burston Community Primary School, Crown Green, Burston, Diss, IP22 5TZ This letter is a big 'thank you' for making me so welcome in your school and helping me to find out about it. I hope a grown-up will read my letter to you if you need some help with it. Here are some of the best things I discovered about your school: - You told me you feel part of a big school family and everyone is friendly and caring. - You know that your teachers listen to your views and give you lots of chances to take responsibility for activities in and out of school. - Your parents think you go to a good school and I agree with them. - You like your teachers and I can see that they are the reason that you do well in your work, especially making you really good readers. - There are many interesting things going on all the time in your school, and even more now when you join with Tivetshall School too. - Mrs Cooke works closely with the staff and governors to make sure that you all do well. In all schools, there are some things that could be even better. You can help with some of these in your school: - Most importantly, I want you all to do the best you can to improve your writing and the way you set out your written work. This is an important skill for your future life. - It would be useful if the school assesses what you can and can not do in detail when pupils start at the school so that your progress can be followed more fully. - I have asked the staff and governors to make sure that they keep in close contact with your parents, so that the people at home know how best to help you with your school work. Please remember to take home any letters or messages for your parents. I hope you keep enjoying all your school offers you. Yours sincerely, Mrs Helen Ranger Lead inspector