

# Burford Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123014
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292558
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	87
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Clare Hoggett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Ellie Stacey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 July 2005
<b>School address</b>	Priory Lane Burford OX18 4SG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01993 822159
<b>Fax number</b>	01993 822792

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Burford is a very small primary school located in a rural town. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage and come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The school has just opened a Foundation Stage unit for children aged three and four and they all attend part-time. The other three classes in the school are of mixed-age. The proportion of pupils joining the school at different times is quite high.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Burford is an improving school that provides a satisfactory education. The headteacher and governors have worked hard since the last inspection to manage a challenging period of staffing instability. They have accurately assessed all aspects of the school's work and have secured some good improvements. These include the successful introduction of the Foundation Stage unit and staff appointments that have led to consistent teaching and rising standards. This now places the school in a stronger position and demonstrates satisfactory leadership. The vast majority of parents are pleased, one commenting, 'There has been a huge improvement in the school over the last two years', and another paying tribute to the staff, who have established 'a sense of real community spirit'.

Standards are average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. The staff provide a consistent programme of teaching and support that has accelerated pupils' progress in reading and raised standards. However, progress in writing is slower because pupils are not getting enough opportunities to write extensively. Mathematics standards are rising but national tests show that the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is below average. This is because in some mathematics lessons tasks are not challenging enough for pupils of higher ability.

The staff are committed to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a positive climate for learning in all classes. Pupils are well behaved, attentive in lessons, and show caring attitudes to each other around the school. Good attendance rates reflect pupils' enjoyment of school. 'There's lots to do and you make friends easily', says one. Pupils take an active role as school councillors representing the views of others. Pupils take on responsibilities in the local and wider community. Charitable fund raising and the celebration of festivals or musical performances support their social and cultural development. There is a good focus on health and fitness with many clubs, sports and activities on offer.

The curriculum is planned for mixed-age classes. However, teachers do not always provide enough challenge for all pupils. Information and communication technology (ICT) and interactive whiteboards are used well by teachers to focus pupils' learning. Satisfactory care, guidance and support enable pupils to feel safe and secure in school. Assessments help teachers to provide pupils with individual targets but these are not always challenging enough. Those with learning difficulties or disabilities receive good pastoral support, helping them to work towards their individual learning targets.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Stimulating indoor and outdoor experiences and satisfactory teaching help Foundation Stage children reach the learning goals expected of five-year-olds. Children enjoy the challenges offered. They solve problems when building towers or constructing animal habitats like a rabbit hutch using soft play resources. Stimulating counting activities, like stepping on numbers on the floor, or sorting play animals into groups, improve the children's mathematical development. The skilled teaching of letter sounds and opportunities to handle books successfully develop the children's language and communication skills. There is an effective balance of welfare and care so children quickly settle into routines and understand what is expected of them. As one

child explained, 'We have to wash our hands before we make pizzas so it is clean'. Skilled staff are vigilant to ensure that the children work and play in a safe environment. Some children do not settle to specific activities for long enough, reflecting weaknesses in the way adults assess the children's performance in all areas of learning. Children work cooperatively with others, learning from their mistakes and negotiating roles when undertaking group tasks. The staff take good account of parents' views.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise writing standards and provide more opportunities for pupils to write extensively in a range of subjects
- Ensure that the teaching has a greater impact on the achievement of higher ability pupils, particularly in mathematics
- Make more rigorous use of assessment throughout the school and Foundation Stage unit, to ensure that tasks in lessons are better matched to pupils' needs and abilities.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The children enter the Foundation stage with levels of knowledge and skills that are in line with most three and four-year-olds. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school prioritised reading, which resulted in much improved reading results in national tests this year compared with previous years. However, pupils make slower progress in writing because they lack the confidence to write at length independently. The staff make effective use of assessment to track the performance of pupils who join the school at different times. However, the staff are not using assessment to set challenging targets for all pupils. This is especially the case in mathematics where national tests show that the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is lower than that of most schools. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress and receive good pastoral support, although in some cases, their learning targets should be more challenging.

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

### **Grade: 2**

This is a strength. Pupils' positive approach to learning, good behaviour and attendance are a tribute to the efforts of the staff and school community. Pupils are aware of how to stay fit and healthy. They participate enthusiastically in sport, music and the creative arts. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe because, as one Year 6 pupil said, 'there is always an adult or a friend to turn to'. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on important spiritual and moral themes in well-planned assemblies and class discussions. They gain from the school's enterprising spirit when organising funds for the school fete. Pupils play together well in the exciting 'paddock' and know what to do in the rare cases of any bullying. Pupils maintain good friendships and relationships are very positive. There are plans to link with another school in Oxford to extend pupils' understanding of multi-cultural communities in Britain. The pupils are learning ICT and basic skills that give them a sound basis for their future education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

There is a positive learning climate in classes because teachers set consistent expectations for behaviour. The objectives of lessons are shared with pupils from the start, although the tasks provided are not always challenging enough for pupils of higher ability, especially in mathematics. Support staff are good at helping those with learning difficulties or disabilities when working in groups. In some lessons, over-long and laboured class discussions slow pupils' progress, including those with learning difficulties, so pupils are too passive for long periods of time. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their marking and assessments to provide challenging targets and work for all pupils. However, this is not typical, as assessments are not always being used to plan tasks that are matched closely enough to the needs of pupils of different abilities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

A good range of enrichment includes visits and visitors to the school and these add an extra dimension to pupils' studies. Teachers plan their work carefully to ensure that pupils experience balanced programmes of study across all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, there are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to write independently and at length across all subjects. This slows their progress in writing and accounts for the inconsistent quality of writing in pupils' workbooks. Pupils enjoy a good range of visits, including the recent residential visit for older pupils. These are successful in improving the pupils' personal, social and physical development. Music and the arts as well as a good range of sports and activities support pupils' cultural development. The school is improving the use of ICT across the curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Procedures to safeguard pupils are well organised and effective. They are provided with good pastoral support and care. Parents feel welcome and are confident that the staff will take good care of their children. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's work and progress. However, assessment systems are not being used well enough to set challenging targets for all pupils. Teachers' marking is consistently used to provide helpful pointers for improvement and is linked to individual learning targets. However, the targets set for pupils of higher ability are not always challenging enough. Pupils have some good opportunities to assess their own learning in lessons.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

The headteacher has shown determined leadership that has guided improvements to standards and the quality of teaching. She has worked closely with the senior teacher and governors to set the right priorities for improvement. The staff respond to the views of parents and pupils, which accounts for the high level of satisfaction expressed by parents. Accurate evaluations of the school's work are helping to move the school forward. However, the analysis of assessment data is not sharp enough to check if all pupils are on course to reach their targets. Governors

provide satisfactory support and hold the school to account. Together with the staff they monitor the pupils' performance although this has not always been robust enough to identify pockets of underachievement. The introduction of the Foundation Stage unit and ICT resources in all classes has extended what the school is able to offer its pupils. The school is proud of its standing in the local community and its track record of improvement shows that it has satisfactory capacity to raise standards further.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

3 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burford Primary School, Burford, OX18 4SG

I was very pleased to visit your school. You all made me feel welcome and I really enjoyed your company at lunchtime and at other times during the two days.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. You all work hard with your teachers and I agree with the many parents who say that your school is improving. I was very impressed with the new Foundation Stage building and very pleased to see the younger children making pizzas and having a great time. There are some good things about your school and some areas that need to improve further.

- You are well behaved, polite and considerate.
- Your teachers help you to reach good standards in reading, science and ICT.
- You enjoy school because there are lots of things to do during and after school, including sport, music and the arts.
- Your parents are very pleased with you and your teachers and the school works closely with them.

I have asked your teachers to:

- help you do even better in writing
- help you reach higher standards in mathematics
- keep checking how well you are all doing to make sure you all reach your targets.

Well done and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector