

# Burgoyne Middle School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109676
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310060
<b>Inspection date</b>	8 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jim Henry

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>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Mrs A Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Birch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Mill Lane Potton Sandy Bedfordshire SG19 2PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01767 260034
<b>Fax number</b>	01767 260035

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<b>Age group</b>	9-13
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Burgoyne Middle School is situated in Potton, a small market town in Bedfordshire, and serves both its local community and the relatively advantaged surrounding rural area. Burgoyne is much smaller than most other middle schools, with pupils entering, aged nine, with standards that are higher than expected. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above that normally found. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds with English as their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Burgoyne Middle School provides its pupils with a good standard of education and has good capacity to improve further. Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. When asked, one pupil readily said 'We learn every day because our teachers explain things and we use 'talking partners' to learn from each other'. Based on a strong family ethos, the school provides pupils with good care, guidance and support. While the majority of parents recognise this and are supportive of the school, a minority of parental questionnaires returned expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying. The school has effective procedures to deal with any such difficulties as they arise and pupils are fully aware of the school's reward and sanction systems. When asked, pupils said they felt safe in school, bullying was rare. Because of the positive and caring ethos of the school, they have every confidence to turn to both their peers and staff if they have any kind of difficulty. Pupils show care and respect for staff and one another and, as a result, behaviour both in class and around the school is good. This is reflected in the outstanding level of attendance that is consistently well above the national average. There are thorough procedures in place for safeguarding pupils and good arrangements for the transition of pupils, both on entry in Year 5 and on leaving in Year 8.

The curriculum meets the needs of all learners. There is a strong emphasis on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are further developed by the use of specialist teaching in subjects such as science, information and communication technology (ICT), French, music and physical education. Pupils enjoy and willingly participate in a wide range of activities in sport, drama and music. They appreciate the opportunities of residential visits to France, Norfolk and York and welcome the variety of visitors to the school. One pupil talked enthusiastically about a visit to the Tate Modern Art Gallery and of learning about the Victorians through the expertise of a visiting speaker. This not only enlivens the curriculum and extends pupils' learning, it also contributes to their good personal development. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about other cultures and faiths and in citizenship lessons they have the opportunity to discuss issues such as drugs and racism. Pupils' spiritual, social, cultural and moral development is good. An example of how they support one another is the use of 'buddies,' where older pupils assist younger ones in reading and as 'playground leaders' around the school. The local vicar visits the school on a regular basis to lead assemblies and support the spiritual development of pupils. There is an effective school council and some classrooms have a book for pupils to express their ideas and opinions. Members of the school council have taken part in the past in the annual 'Children's Conference' held in the nearby Woburn Safari Park. Pupils support the wider community by raising money for charities such as Children in Need and Sightsavers. Food technology focuses on the importance of healthy eating. This, and the wide range of extracurricular sporting activities available mean that pupils are aware and conscious of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future lives because of their good attitude to learning and the good progress they make in basic literacy, numeracy, information, and ICT.

Pupils' make good progress in Year 5 and Year 6. While there have been occasional dips in pupil progress in the past, especially in mathematics in 2006, this has been reversed. Results from national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 showed that standards were significantly above the national average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 7 and Year 8 and leave with standards well above those expected for their age. During the past few years, a number of staff have coordinated provision for special

educational needs in the school. Throughout these changes, pupils who need extra help with their learning have continued to make good progress. This is because of the positive support, guidance and provision given both in and out of lessons. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. There are effective systems for tracking and monitoring their progress and successful steps taken to challenge any who may fall behind. The school works effectively with its partner schools in order to ensure that pupils have continuity to their education.

Pupils achieve high standards and make good progress because of the effective teaching across the school. Teachers foster positive relationships and help pupils make good progress when they challenge them through their questions and the tasks they set. They also help pupils to achieve well when they involve them in their own learning. For example, in one lesson pupils enjoyed using drama to develop their language skills successfully. Teachers plan well and share the purposes of lessons with the pupils. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn. Work usually meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Support staff are well deployed and make good contributions to pupils' learning, especially those who benefit from additional help. While pupils know their targets and work is marked regularly, teachers' written feedback is variable. In some subjects, the comments do not always provide pupils with the guidance they need to improve further.

Leadership and management at all levels in the school are good. The headteacher, supported by the senior management team, provides clear leadership that is focused on raising standards and the well-being of each pupil. There have been a number of senior staff changes over the past two years and this has strengthened leadership and management in the school. Through a strong sense of teamwork and a firm commitment to continuing to improve the school, good progress has been made since the last inspection. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and correctly focuses on key issues for further improvement. The governing body has been reorganised. Governors now visit the school regularly and are increasingly effective in monitoring and challenging the work of the school.

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

- Continue to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress and attain high standards in all subjects over time.
- Ensure consistency of marking across all subjects to inform pupils how to improve 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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	1
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

9 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burgoyne Middle School, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2PG.

Thank you for making me feel welcome and helping me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you work together in your lessons. The headteacher and the rest of the teachers and adults in the school care for you well and work hard to make sure you feel safe and enjoy school.

After spending a day at your school, I thought you might like to know what I found out. Burgoyne Middle School provides you with a good standard of education.

- You behave well and are eager to do your best in school.
- You look after one another well and are always willing to help the staff of the school.
- You enjoy and participate in the different sports, drama and music activities that the school offers.
- Many of you do well, make good progress and achieve well above national standards.
- The quality of teaching you receive is good.

To help you to do even better, I have asked the staff to make sure that:

- all of you continue to make consistently good progress in all subjects and that this is maintained over time
- when marking your work, teachers give you clear guidance on how well you are doing and how you can help yourself to improve even more.

You can help by continuing the positive attitude you have to school and working hard with your teachers to achieve your potential. I am sure that everyone will do his or her best and the school will continue to be a happy place to learn and improve even further.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jim Henry

Lead inspector