

Burton End Community Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 124557 |
| Local Authority | Suffolk |
| Inspection number | 314963 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 May 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Alison Pangbourne |

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

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| Type of school | First |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 319 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Kate Short |
| Headteacher | Ms Fay Trussler |
| Date of previous school inspection | 17 November 2003 |
| School address | School Lane Burton End Haverhill Suffolk CB9 9DE |
| Telephone number | 01440702376 |
| Fax number | 01440714097 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large First school. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. There is an increasing number of pupils from ethnic heritages. A few pupils, mainly from Poland, are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion known to be eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies each year but is broadly average. Almost one quarter of these pupils have speech and language difficulties. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment varies but it is often below what is expected for their age, particularly in language and mathematical skills. The school provides a breakfast club and after school care. The school has recently been awarded the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme certificate for its work in the Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents are very positive about it. Typical of many, a parent wrote, 'All the teachers know all the pupils and that makes them feel comfortable and more able to learn.' The pupils agree saying, 'You can't be bored at lunch, there's always something to do.'

Pupils' rate of progress improves as they move through the school. This is because the headteacher and senior staff have high expectations for each pupil and thorough tracking of their progress ensures that extra support is given for any who are falling behind or forging ahead. In 2007, standards in Year 2 and Year 4 were broadly average. This year, standards are likely to remain broadly average in Year 2, despite an unusually high number of pupils in the year group who find it hard to learn. Standards in Year 4 are on course to be above national expectations for the age group. All pupils, including those who find it hard to learn and those who speak English as an additional language, make good overall progress from their starting points and achieve well.

There are several reasons why pupils do well. Good leadership and management contribute positively to the school's success. The school is emerging from a difficult period with no deputy headteacher and a temporary leadership team, but the headteacher and governors have ensured that the management of the school has effectively been shared to make best use of individual skills and to maintain standards. The school has correctly identified that the roles of senior leaders need strengthening for the school to continue on its journey of improvement at a greater pace. The exciting curriculum, enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors, interests the pupils and encourages them to learn. Although the quality of teaching and learning is good and contributes positively to progress, there are some inconsistencies and the headteacher has already identified the need to raise the quality of teaching still further. The current system for making checks does not give teachers a clear enough view of what they need to do to improve.

Pupils' personal development is good. They receive good care, guidance and support so they grow in confidence. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting the caring ethos of the school. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils are polite and friendly. The older pupils enjoy helping the younger ones. Pupils enjoy coming to school but attendance is average despite the school's considerable efforts to improve it. Pupils develop an excellent understanding about keeping healthy, both by eating a balanced diet and through the many opportunities to keep fit. There is a good emphasis on keeping safe and pupils contribute to the community well.

The governors watch over the school effectively. They are committed and are keen for the school to do its best. Self-evaluation is accurate, if a little modest at times, and the good progress since the previous inspection indicates that the school has a good capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents recognise the good provision made for the children. One wrote, 'I am very impressed with my daughter's progress in the Nursery. She would like to go at the weekend!' Most children in the Nursery go on to join the Reception classes. By this time, their attainment is below expectations for their age because many have much ground to make up. Children make good progress and most are on course to meet the early learning goals set for them nationally by

the beginning of Year 1. They achieve well because the quality of teaching is good and staff make learning fun. The Nursery children were excited to be racing with their teddies on sports day. Each teddy sported a named label written by the children. The children love coming to school, rushing to leave their parents and carers to find out what they will be learning. Good leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures that activities meet the children's needs and that the curriculum is well planned. Each child's progress is monitored and any areas of difficulty are identified and dealt with promptly. Behaviour is good because the staff make their high expectations clear. Although the outdoor area is used well, access is too difficult for the Reception children to use it as an integral part of the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a more rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, to ensure greater consistency.
- Strengthen the roles of the leadership team in order to increase further the pace of improvement throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. In 2007, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the higher than expected level 3 in assessments was broadly average in reading, a little above in writing and a little below in mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils was working at lower than expected levels, particularly in mathematics. Although standards this year are broadly average they have improved, with fewer pupils working at below the expected standards for their age, especially in mathematics. This is because the support given to help pupils, and particularly those who find it hard to learn, has helped them to improve. In the last few years, the school has raised its understanding of what pupils can achieve and this is now showing in standards in Year 4. They are above the national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and treat one another kindly. They are polite, well mannered and speak confidently to adults. During an interview with the school council, a younger pupil arrived late. One of the older ones immediately stood up and said 'Here have my seat.' Pupils behave well in lessons but sometimes lose concentration when activities are not as interesting as they could be. The school has worked hard to introduce pupils to the wide range of cultures represented in society, and as a result, they treat one another with respect. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They really enjoy the wide range of clubs, such as the computer club. Pupils have the opportunity to take on responsibilities through a range of jobs and the school council. They particularly enjoy learning in the school grounds and as a result, show good care for the school environment. Pupils are building a good foundation for later life and the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers make good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, which stimulate pupils' imagination and help to maintain their interest. Their enthusiastic approach and good subject knowledge motivates pupils, promoting their personal development. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and, as a result, behaviour is generally good. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to think, to develop their own ideas and demonstrate what they know. Teachers provide suitable challenges. They know that some pupils enjoy practical activities and they ensure that pupils learn according to their individual learning styles. In some satisfactory lessons, teaching is not exciting enough and pupils sometimes spend too long without being actively engaged. Lessons are mostly well planned and based on effective assessments of pupils' achievements. Pupils who find it hard to learn are well supported by talented support staff to enable them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy a good curriculum. Workshops presented by visiting artists, together with good use of the local environment, contribute well to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Well-organised resources and highly attractive displays effectively support learning. Photographs on display contribute to pupils' high self-esteem. The curriculum is constantly reviewed to ensure that individual needs are met. Plans are in place to develop the programme for more able pupils. Pupils are very confident in the use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning and successful strategies to improve essential skills, such as 'Thinking Hats' contribute to pupils' overall personal development. However, the school has not developed consistent ways to enable the few pupils with English as an additional language to use their home language when learning as well as English, so that they become confident communicators more quickly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff work effectively to ensure that pupils are well cared for and kept safe. Appropriate procedures for safeguarding pupils and for child protection are in place. There are good links with external agencies that contribute positively to the progress made by those who find it hard to learn. Teachers thoroughly track the progress of pupils and use the information gained to set targets for improvement, although not all pupils are fully aware of these. Marking is thorough but there is scope to give more feedback to pupils about how well they are doing. Playground buddies and a wide range of activities mean that pupils feel safe at playtime. One pupil said, 'We show concern for one another and know what to do when we are worried.' They say that teachers always respond if they have a problem. Some teachers use a very effective 'How are you feeling?' board in the classroom to find out if pupils in their class are unhappy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and challenging targets are now helping to raise standards for all pupils. The school has been without a deputy headteacher for some time and the headteacher and governors have sensibly shared leadership responsibilities amongst senior staff, several of whom are in an 'acting' capacity. With the recent appointment of a deputy headteacher, the school has correctly identified that the roles of the leadership team need reviewing and strengthening to take the school forward at a greater pace. Subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well and all are committed to improvement. Although the quality of teaching is monitored regularly, the feedback given to staff is not always linked to their professional development and does not give them clear enough guidance on how to improve their teaching. The governors are committed and act as good 'critical friends.'

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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 |

¹ 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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 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

21 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Burton End Community Primary School, Haverhill, CB9 9DE

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. We would like to tell you what we found out.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and that the grown-ups look after you well. We agree with you. You make good progress as you move through the school. We thought that you behave well and that you are polite to each other and to visitors. You have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy. You have interesting things to do in lessons and in your clubs. We were impressed by all the plants that you are growing and learning about. The teachers and governors who lead your school work hard to make it better and give you things that you like to learn. Your families know that you go to a good school.

We have asked Ms Trussler to share out the responsibilities that some of your teachers have in running the school when your new deputy headteacher comes, to make sure that your school improves even further. We have also asked her to make sure that teachers know how to make their teaching even better. You can help by continuing to try hard and do your best.

We hope you carry on enjoying your time at Burton End School and do well in your next school.

Best wishes

Alison Pangbourne Lead inspector