

# Burrowmoor Primary School

Burrowmoor Road, March, Cambridgeshire PE15 9RP

## Inspection dates

30 November–1 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Procedures for performance management and the tracking of pupils' progress are not well enough established to support school leaders who are improving teaching and learning.
- Some middle leaders are still learning how to lead effectively and, consequently, they do not have sufficient impact on the areas for which they are responsible.
- The welfare of parents and their children who have an education, health and care plan has not been good enough because of poor communication. Consequently, a small group of parents lack confidence in the school to provide appropriate support for their children.
- The teaching and learning of history, geography and science are not good enough. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and skills development within these subjects is sporadic.
- The most able pupils are not stretched enough in mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average because of weaknesses in teaching experienced by the pupils during their time in key stage 1.

### The school has the following strengths

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders, governors and the trust have led marked improvements to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Pupils now make good progress when writing.
- This summer, at the end of Year 6, pupils' overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. This is because of the good progress that they made during their time in Year 6.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils demonstrate much-improved attitudes to learning in lessons. Typically, they work hard and try to do their best.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children enter the Nursery or Reception classes with skills development that is lower than expected. Good-quality teaching, learning and assessment ensure that they make good progress to catch up.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and outcomes by:
  - developing a consistent approach to skills development in history, geography and science to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - providing harder work for the most able pupils in mathematics so that they make faster progress
  - using the information about pupil progress in key stage 1 more effectively, to ensure that the work planned for pupils is designed to meet their specific needs.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that procedures to manage the performance of teachers and to track the progress of pupils underpin the improvements made to teaching and learning
  - further developing the leadership skills of some middle leaders so that they can have a greater impact within the areas for which they are responsible.
- The governing body should commission a review of the education, health and care plans and provision for all pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The findings of this review should be communicated effectively, so that the school gains the trust of the parents of these pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Some middle leaders, for example those responsible for teaching and learning in subjects other than mathematics and English and for key stage 1, are not yet fully effective. However, they are developing their leadership skills from a low starting point.
- Assessment procedures to track the progress of groups of pupils and to compare with others outside the school are underdeveloped. As a result, it is difficult for teachers and leaders to demonstrate the better progress being made by pupils that is evident from the work in their books. The assessment procedures used to identify the gaps in pupils' learning because of weak teaching in the past are more effective. Teachers, particularly in key stage 2, use this assessment wisely to plan lessons to fill these gaps.
- Procedures to manage the performance of teachers and teaching assistants have been slow to be implemented this term, although it is understandable that the new headteacher wanted to assess the performance of staff before these meetings. Nevertheless, school leaders and governors appreciate that this formal process needs to be completed swiftly to complement the effective professional development work taking place and to ensure that teachers have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them by school leaders.
- The executive headteacher, the new headteacher and governors demonstrate effective leadership. They have ensured that the necessary improvements to the teaching and learning of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics have occurred and that behaviour throughout the school and the quality of education in the early years have improved markedly.
- The new headteacher is establishing a culture of high expectations for respect and tolerance. Morale has improved as all staff demonstrate a determination to improve the education of pupils.
- The curriculum for some subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics does not make specific what is to be expected in terms of skills development for pupils of different ages. For example, when carrying out experiments in science, it is not clear to teachers or pupils the level of sophistication expected from a Year 6 pupil when compared to a younger pupil. In subjects such as physical education and design and technology, the curriculum, teaching and learning are much better.
- The curriculum for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has improved since the previous inspection. This incorporates effective teaching and learning of fundamental British values. The wide range of good-quality extra-curricular activities has made a strong contribution to this development.
- The pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is generally used effectively. These pupils make much improved progress when compared to the others in the school. One reason for this is the support from well-trained teaching assistants who work with pupils to overcome their differences in learning resulting from weak teaching in the past. It appears from the national unvalidated information that they make slower progress. This was the case earlier in key stage 2 but, over the last two years, their

progress has accelerated in line with the others in the school.

- The trust has aided governors in making the necessary strategic decisions to strengthen teaching and leadership. These are now bearing fruit, as senior leaders are able to demonstrate that they can make improvements to middle leadership, teaching and learning without relying on outside support. The use of the sports premium has been effective in broadening the sports opportunities of pupils through the links with the local secondary school, where physical education specialists are employed to teach the pupils.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance of the school has strengthened since the previous inspection. Governors are better trained and have a good understanding of their strategic responsibilities. They have demonstrated, over the last 18 months, that they are effective in holding senior leaders to account for making the necessary improvements to education at the school.
- However, during the summer there was a review and reorganisation of the teaching assistants' conditions of service to ensure the best use of resources to support all pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors presided over weak communication between school leaders and a group of parents whose children, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, would be most affected by the planned changes. Inspectors took note of the concerns expressed by these parents and closely examined the provision and plans for a sample of these pupils. Inspectors found that the provision and the plans were of good quality and an improvement on the past. Nevertheless, parents are unlikely to be convinced by this until a review of the provision for all these pupils is completed and effectively communicated to parents.
- Governors have a good grasp of the improvements to progress of different groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils. They keep a careful check on the work of senior leaders to strengthen teaching and to reward teachers appropriately.
- Statutory responsibilities, such as those for safeguarding, are dealt with effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established a culture of safety within the school. There are, however, aspects that could be strengthened. The school adheres to safer recruitment requirements, but currently has to rely on the trust to oversee recruitment because the appropriate school leaders and governors are yet to complete the scheduled training. At the time of the inspection, the review of the safeguarding policy had just been completed and required publicising to parents.
- Safeguarding training for staff is adequately completed and records are kept to alert staff when future training is required.
- The safeguarding records of vulnerable pupils are in good order, showing that procedures and links with other agencies are productive, and timely action is taken to

secure the safety of these pupils.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- The teaching of mathematics varies in quality across the school. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils. The work set does not stretch them sufficiently because they do not have enough opportunity for reasoning and problem-solving.
- In key stage 1, teachers do not use assessment information about the pupils well enough when planning work. When this happens, the most able pupils do not receive work that is hard enough and other pupils struggle when the work is too difficult. These relative weaknesses were also evident in some lessons in Years 5 and 6.
- Too little attention, until recently, has been focused on improving the teaching, learning and assessment in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. Too much emphasis is based on the knowledge aspects in subjects such as history, geography and science, rather than the skills and understanding elements. A common understanding of the subject-specific skill development that underpins high expectations is not firmly established across the teaching team.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are working hard to improve their teaching. They take a professional approach when weaknesses are pointed out and plan and share ideas to improve their teaching. This is particularly the case in Years 3 and 4, where there has been a marked improvement in teaching over the last 18 months. This is also the case in Years 1 and 2, where a relatively new team is working with determination to improve the teaching and learning of those in its care.
- Writing and reading are now taught more effectively across the school. One reason for this is that teachers give pupils the opportunity to apply their literacy skills when writing across a range of subjects. Also, the teaching of phonics is much improved.
- Teaching assistants are proving much more effective when working with groups of pupils. This is the case with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as the most able.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The welfare of pupils with education, health and care plans was undermined by weaknesses in communication to parents. While there is evidence that the provision is much improved, the loss of trust among these parents has yet to be recovered.
- Other aspects of personal development and welfare are much more effective. The school provides a safe environment for pupils to learn. Pupils are taught how to deal with bullying of various sorts and they report an understanding of what they should do if it does occur.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe when using digital media. They were able to explain what they would do in potentially dangerous situations when using a

computer or a mobile phone.

- Effective relationships have been established with staff at lunchtimes and during lessons. These relationships nurture pupils' emotional well-being. In the past, an emphasis on being a successful learner was missing. Since the time of the previous inspection, pupils' confidence and resilience have developed well. For example, pupils were observed trying hard to complete work using their own initiative and they did not give up.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave sensibly and politely around the school. In lessons, most pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning. They try hard and demonstrate a pride in their work.
- The behaviour management system is used consistently by most staff and, consequently, behaviour in lessons is much improved. At the time of the previous inspection, the behaviour of a minority of pupils who had difficulty controlling their behaviour was a cause of concern. These pupils are now far better looked after and they rarely disrupt learning.
- The attendance of pupils declined slightly last year and was just below average. The recent establishment of an attendance team has ensured that this year attendance has risen compared to last year.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- From their starting points, the progress made by different groups of pupils is not good because it is uneven across the school. Generally, groups of pupils in Years 3, 4, 6 and the early years make more rapid progress than pupils in Years 1, 2 and 5. This is because of the variation in the quality of teaching.
- In July 2016, the results show that, by the end of Year 6, the most able pupils did not make as much progress as they could in reading and mathematics across key stage 2. Although they made better progress last year, it was insufficient to ensure that they reached their full potential. The proportion that attain above the expected level is below the national average.
- By the end of Year 2, results show that, in 2016, the proportion of pupils in most groups, including disadvantaged pupils, who attained the expected standard was below the national average. This is largely because they experienced weak teaching earlier in key stage 1. Currently, the teaching in key stage 1, while still requiring improvement, is improving.
- Across the school, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, made better progress last year, but by the end of Year 6, the difference in attainment with other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics had still not been overcome.
- Overall, by the end of Year 6 in 2016, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard in reading and writing was above average. In mathematics, it was broadly average. This is because of the rapid progress made by all groups to catch up

in Year 6.

- Pupils now make good progress in writing in both key stages 1 and 2. Handwriting is improving, as are the skills of punctuation, grammar and spelling. The content of writing is interesting, as pupils use the themes they are taught in other subjects as the basis for their work.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in subjects such as history, geography and science. They find the knowledge aspects interesting, which is helpful when they apply their literacy and numeracy skills in these subjects. However, they are not learning the specialist subject skills that would enable them to develop into historians, geographers or scientists.
- Pupils are developing proficient reading skills. The least able use their knowledge of phonics to decipher words and others use these skills well when researching work in other subjects. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the accelerated reading programme that takes place in the school library. This programme is fostering a love of reading among the pupils who take part in it.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or difficulties are making better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. These pupils are better supported by well-trained teaching assistants and school leaders keep a careful check on the progress of these pupils.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Many of the children enter the early years with skills development that is typically lower than that expected of their age. They make good progress, so that the proportion having a good level of development in readiness for Year 1 is close to the national average. This represents an improvement in achievement since the previous inspection.
- In 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged children with a good level of development has increased and is similar to other children nationally. One reason for this is the effective assessment procedures, where teachers and teaching assistants use the information about children to provide activities tailored to meet their specific needs.
- The environment for learning both in the Nursery and the Reception class is stimulating. Children's interests are captured by the activities that they can choose to take part in. For example, children were trying really hard to make Gruffalo biscuits, placing facial features precisely using smarties.
- Children are developing their social skills well. They understand the school behaviour code and report how they like to be on the 'green' because it means they are being well behaved.
- Leadership is effective, resulting in the improvements to provision and assessment. However, the analysis of assessment information for groups is not as well developed as it could be. For example, while leaders have rightly identified that overall the proportion of children having a good level of development is increasing, they have not looked with enough detail to identify why some groups, such as those that do not benefit from pupil premium funding, did less well last year than the previous year.

## School details

Unique reference number	139843
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10020493

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	452
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Smith
Headteacher	Susan Dobbs
Telephone number	01354 652 330
Website	<a href="http://www.burrowmoor.net">www.burrowmoor.net</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@burrowmoorprimary.org.uk">office@burrowmoorprimary.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- A larger-than-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school is an academy that is part of the Active Learning Trust.
- The executive headteacher is also the headteacher of the local secondary school. The new headteacher started in post in September 2016.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe teaching, learning, pupils' behaviour and their work. They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, representatives from the Active Learning Trust and governors.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at the safeguarding policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and other information provided by the school leaders.
- They spoke to parents informally and looked at a recent parent survey carried out by the school. As a result of the informal conversations with parents, a careful scrutiny of the provision and plans for some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was carried out.

## Inspection team

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