

Inspection of Burwell Village College (Primary)

The Causeway, Burwell, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB25 0DU

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their school and attend well. They particularly like the activities provided in the 'cultural capital' lessons and in the school's many clubs, such as dance, origami, and sport. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy learning. Many aspects of the curriculum are new and pupils have not had the chance to build up their knowledge over time in several subjects.

Children make a good start to their education in Reception. They learn to make responsible choices in their learning and play. Reception is a happy, purposeful and well-organised place in which children learn.

From the start of Reception, pupils develop an understanding of the importance of kindness and collaboration. They work happily together in lessons. Their behaviour is good. They get along well at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils look out for each other's well-being. Their relationships with adults are respectful and positive.

Pupils know what bullying is and the forms that it can take. They said, that while there can be fallouts between friends, there is little bullying in their school. They also said that adults help pupils to solve any problems that do occur. Pupils feel safe and are safe.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There have been many changes at Burwell Village College including to the curriculum. Leaders judged that the quality of the curriculum was not good enough. Working to ambitious plans, leaders and staff are bringing about the required improvements. They value the local authority's guidance in doing so.

Leaders' well-ordered curriculum plans in many subjects are new. Teachers are getting to grips with how best to deliver them. So, leaders' high expectations for what pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) should learn are not yet being fulfilled across all subjects. Pupils have not developed a secure understanding of key information in several subjects. When pupils come up against tricky problems, some are not confident to apply their knowledge to have a go at solving them.

The curriculum is better established in some subjects and in Reception. Where this is the case, teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. They have good subject knowledge and provide pupils with suitable learning activities. Teachers check what pupils know and put right any misunderstandings they have. In these subjects, many pupils flourish. They remember key facts and use them to solve problems and take on new information. Their work is of good quality. This is the case in design and technology and writing, for example.

Children in Reception start to learn to read very early on. Adults deliver phonics with confidence and accuracy. They give children lots of opportunities to practise their phonics and reading. Children enjoy stories, which adults read with infectious enthusiasm. By the end of key stage 1, many pupils are keen and fluent readers.

The reading curriculum and its delivery are not as effective across key stage 2. Pupils do not build on their strong start in reading as well as they should. Subject leaders of English are putting this right. The results of their initial work are promising, but not common practice.

Teachers make suitable adjustments so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates. Adults support pupils with SEND to remember important information in subjects such as mathematics.

Pupils enjoy making a positive contribution to their school and community. They do so through the school's cultural capital programme and pupil leadership opportunities. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 learn about positive relationships. They are considerate of others and develop strategies to sustain friendships. They say that adults care for them. Pupils appreciate the extra pastoral support that leaders have provided – such as that in the school's well-being room.

Governors provide appropriate scrutiny of leaders' work. Leaders, including governors, want pupils to have the best education as soon as possible. This has raised expectations of staff, who are keen to play their part. Leaders set aside time for staff to receive training and plan together each week. The pace and scale of change has been unsettling for a few staff. Staff would welcome the chance to work with leaders to further review the impact of the improvements being made.

Most parents agree that their children do well and are happy in school. Many parents would recommend the school to others. A minority would not. Some parents expressed frustration about communications with the school. Some are worried or not clear about the number of changes that are taking place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors check that the school fulfils its responsibilities relating to safeguarding. They welcome and take heed of external scrutiny, such as that provided by the local authority, to provide further assurance of leaders' work.

Leaders provide staff with training and safeguarding updates. Staff are alert to their safeguarding duties. They know the signs that indicate a pupil may be vulnerable and need help. Leaders seek guidance and assistance from expert external agencies when pupils need additional support. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they say that adults give them helpful tips about how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The impact of leaders' changes to the early reading curriculum is evident in Reception and in key stage 1. The design and implementation of the reading curriculum across key stage 2 is not consistently impactful. Some teachers are piloting an amended approach in key stage 2. Leaders should assess the effectiveness of this work, and then provide all relevant staff with the training and resources so that they are well placed to teach reading effectively.
- In several subjects, curriculum plans are new. Staff are increasingly familiar with and confident in the delivery of the curriculum in some subjects and pupils achieve well. Teachers are still getting to grips with how to deliver the curriculum in other subjects. Leaders should finalise their plans, including timescales, to provide staff with the training so that they can deliver the curriculum effectively in all subjects.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced numerous changes of leadership. This amount of change has limited the sustained impact of school improvement. Current leaders want to swiftly bring about the necessary sustained improvement, while remaining mindful of the pressures of the national pandemic. The effect of their changes is evident in several aspects of the school's work. Leaders and staff should take further steps to review the impact of their work. Leaders should then make appropriate adjustments and recommunicate their plans and timescales to staff so that improvements continue to have an impact.
- Many parents are positive about the work of leaders and staff. Some parents are unhappy with aspects of the school's work and do not feel well informed about their children's education. Some parents are concerned about the turnover of staff. Leaders should review their strategy and avenues for communication to ensure that: parents are given appropriate information about changes, including those relating to staffing that take place; leaders provide timely responses to any specific queries that individual parents may have about their children's education.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110758
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10207068
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Edris Tildesley
Headteacher	Antony Kern
Website	http://www.burwellvillage.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Burwell Village College (Primary) is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- There has been a considerable turnover of staff, including leaders since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up his post in April 2020.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator and several other school leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, design and technology, geography, mathematics and reading.
- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils

about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to several pupils read.

- Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders and looked at curriculum plans and some pupils' work in a few other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at school documentation and spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, pupils, parents and three representatives from the local authority to establish the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors, and also met with three representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors also spent time observing and speaking with pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents expressed in the 135 responses to Parent View and in the discussions held with some parents at the start and end of the first day of the inspection. Inspectors consider the views contained in one letter and one email received over the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views presented in the 35 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

John Lucas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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