

Buxted CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114493
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357560
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Saunders

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Whitehead
Headteacher	Anne Radford
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
School address	Hurstwood Road East Sussex TN22 4BB
Telephone number	01825733185
Fax number	01825 733860
Email address	office@buxtedce.e-sussex.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed eight lessons taught by six teachers. They held meetings with senior leaders, groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body, and spoke to parents and carers informally. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. These included pupils' work, the school's tracking of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, school policies and procedures, the school improvement plan and leaders' monitoring records. Questionnaires from staff and pupils and from 59 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the school in addressing the decline in attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 2, and particularly for girls and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How well teachers use what they know about the progress of pupils to plan effective lessons and other support.
- The evidence to support the school's views about the outcomes for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The effectiveness of leaders across the school in evaluating the impact of strategies to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Buxted Primary is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of girls and boys is particularly uneven in some year groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Almost all pupils are from White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. These pupils include those with specific or moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties; speech, language and communication needs and hearing impairment. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a mixed Year 1 and Reception class; Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught separately for four mornings a week. Year 3 and 4, and Year 5 and 6 are taught in mixed-age classes, with some lessons in separate classes. The school have gained the 'BECTA ICT' award, Healthy Schools status and Artsmark Gold.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Buxted Primary is a good school. There is a highly positive atmosphere that stems from the strong leadership of the headteacher and the good care, guidance and support for the pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well in their personal development and make good progress in their academic studies. Their contribution to their community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. Their understanding of how to be healthy is exemplary. Overall, the outcomes for pupils are good. In recent years, attainment has been above the national average in most respects; below average results in mathematics in 2009 have been addressed and have improved. In lessons seen, most pupils were working at levels above those expected for their ages. Progress is consistently good because the teachers know the pupils well and accurately identify their learning needs. However, on occasions teachers spend too long explaining the tasks, when pupils already know what to do. Teachers give pupils helpful comments through marking of work and pupils are encouraged to reflect on these, although they are not expected often enough to respond by correcting work or doing what the comments suggest. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported through a range of strategies provided by well-informed staff, so that they make good progress similar to their peers. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a good start to their learning because of the good resources and excellent relationships between adults and children. However, recording and analysis of the work children do is at an early stage and leaders are aware that this needs to more fully inform planning and parents' and carers' input to their children's learning. The ongoing accurate self-evaluation by senior leaders and the effectiveness of the school in addressing issues which have arisen demonstrate that there is good capacity for further sustained improvement.

◆ Pupils are proud to be part of the school and enjoy lessons a great deal, because they are involved in deciding the topics they study. There are lots of opportunities to explore interesting ideas and activities beyond the lessons. Excellent use of technology and laptop computers means that pupils develop particularly impressive skills. The use of the online learning area has been innovative and engages the pupils in learning beyond the school day. As a pupil said, 'I always feel excited because I'm going to be learning something new.' Attendance has risen further and is high. By the time they leave the school, almost all are confident, well-rounded pupils who are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:

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- ensuring that teachers spend less time explaining tasks, allowing pupils more time to work on them
- giving pupils the opportunity to respond to the teachers' helpful comments in pupils' books.
- Develop more accurate use of evidence about the learning of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to inform planning of activities and the input of parents and carers in their children's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and like the practical approach to the curriculum. They enjoy the 'learning journey' opportunities where they can decide on their own activities, such as dress design and digital animation. In Reception, clear routines and very knowledgeable staff help children to develop good independence quickly and a strong desire to learn. They make good progress from their individual starting points. This good progress continues through Key Stage 1 and 2, so that by the end of Year 6, the attainment of all groups of pupils is above average. Teachers' tracking and reviews of pupils' work show that boys and girls currently perform similarly. Progress is most evident where teachers consistently use accurate targets to focus pupils on what they need to do next. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils responded very positively in a good English lesson, identifying and using features of persuasive texts to advertise mystery objects around the ancient Olympic games.

◆ Pupils greatly enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school and this helps them to feel valued as part of the community. For example, the play leaders are active in helping younger children to develop new games, helping to ensure everybody, especially the younger pupils, feels safe. Although pupils expressed some individual concerns, they rightly say that adults listen and respond to concerns they may have. The school council have been instrumental in bringing about helpful improvements, such as the design for the new library and enhancing the school garden, which pupils enjoy using for lessons. Pupils make an impressive contribution to their local community, for example developing a 'welly walk' guide in the area, as part of the 'High Weald Heroes'. Behaviour is good because the pupils are clear about what is expected of them and they have helped to develop the rules in the classrooms. The very few pupils who find it more difficult to follow the high expectations of behaviour are well supported by all staff and by the pupils themselves, who demonstrate consideration for each other. Pupils get along amicably and have well-developed understanding of the beliefs and cultures of others. They spoke enthusiastically about singing at the O2 Arena with 8,000 pupils, interacting with those from different schools. They enjoy writing to pupils at their link school in Sierra Leone and sharing stories about their school and village. These stories demonstrate their deep reflection about the world around them and spiritual matters. They respond very sensitively to opportunities for contemplation. Interesting opportunities to develop their enterprise skills, work in teams, develop skills on computers, and to learn about managing money mean they are well prepared for their future learning and beyond.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. The pastoral care is a particular strength. The pupils' well-being is the clear focus of all adults in the school and they go to great lengths to make learning interesting and relevant, and to identify and provide for the needs of all pupils. Those who face particular difficulties benefit from the good partnerships the school has developed, with other professionals. A few parents and carers commented on how well the school has supported them through tough situations, or to get the help their children need. The school has recognised that a small minority of pupils are not always confident about who they would talk to if they were worried, and is developing strategies to address this.

During lessons, teachers invariably ensure that pupils are clear about the purpose of the activities. A range of good techniques are widely used to engage pupils, such as discussion in pairs or groups, working on small whiteboards and presenting to the class. Systems to keep track of pupils' progress are well established. Evaluation of this information is generally used well, so that teachers have an accurate view of the learning needs of individuals. However, teachers do not always respond quickly enough to the changing needs of pupils, for example by letting them get on with tasks as soon as pupils understand what they need to do.

◆ The curriculum provides a rich variety of learning opportunities, including languages, arts, music, and enterprise, and makes good use of the school grounds and local

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environment. The online learning area has supported the development of excellent information and communication technology skills and internet safety, and has engaged parents and carers more directly in their children's learning. Topics studied are increasingly the result of pupils' interest, and the school is developing this to improve the curriculum further. The curriculum is enriched by stimulating visits and visitors, such as the visit to the Bank of England and themed weeks like that focusing on international arts. Pupils greatly enjoyed the opportunity to work with a musician and dramatist to produce a musical in a day. Pupils who are particularly able mathematicians receive additional challenge and opportunities, such as working with older pupils and open-ended project work. Extra-curricular clubs are popular and provide a good range of sporting, interest and learning opportunities. These are used well to promote equality of opportunity, particularly for boys and girls.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders are well informed and have established a clear vision to sustain the outcomes for pupils and raise achievement further. They have successfully focused on improving attainment in mathematics, and have implemented strategies to bring consistency to the teaching of writing, for example. Leadership is increasingly shared, so that subject leaders take greater responsibility for ensuring that provision and progress are good. As a result, all staff are clear about the priorities for the school and work together to bring these about. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Improvements in tracking learning are enhanced by meetings in which each pupil's progress is reviewed. This supports the school's good commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination because any unevenness in progress between different groups is quickly identified and tackled. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

Governors are knowledgeable and well trained. The governing body is developing its insight into the analysis of data about pupils' progress. It provides support for the school as well as challenge where necessary. This reinforces the school's accurate view of its work and ensures that the capacity to improve further is good.

◆ All safeguarding regulations were met by the end of the inspection, following some administrative additions to the single central record. All procedures and policies are in line with government requirements. Staff are suitably trained and the school helps pupils to keep themselves safe. The school has been recognised by other partners for its strong contribution in working with others to safeguard children. The school provides a cohesive

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community and there are very close local links. There are good links with schools in other countries, although those within the United Kingdom are less well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a rich and engaging learning environment. It is well resourced and staff and children make good use of all the space available. Children settle into the routines quickly because the staff take time to get to know them as individuals and provide opportunities which are closely matched to their needs.

Relationships are excellent and children's behaviour is very good because they enjoy being at school. Parents and carers said that they were delighted with the way their children had settled in. Staff are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning by prompting and supporting rather than telling. As a result, children are inquisitive and keen to investigate why things happen and use their new skills. For example, children delighted in writing notes and using their excellent understanding of numbers and calculations in the shop area. They make at least good progress, and some make exceptional progress, so that by the time they join Year 1, the majority of them have skills and knowledge which are above those expected for their age. Records of children's work are now being collated in a new format to inform further planning and to improve the information given to parents and carers to help them understand and support their children's learning. However, this has not had the impact it should and so some parents and carers rightly feel that, especially in relation to their child's progress, they would like to know more. The close proximity and opportunities for shared learning mean that the transition to Year 1 is made smoothly.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers completed the questionnaire and they were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. A very small minority had concerns over the information about their child's progress, how the school helps them to support their child's learning and whether their child is well prepared for the future. These were reviewed as part of the inspection. Inspectors found that there are good opportunities for parents and carers to find out about their children's learning and progress, and the online learning area has been a powerful tool to enhance this. Inspectors did find that the information provided to parents and carers in the Early Years Foundation Stage could be more specifically informed by links between the work done by children and the early learning goals. Written comments praised the staff, the leadership and particularly the ethos of the school. These are summarised by one parent or carer who wrote, 'The school's overall approach has captured their imagination and interest in learning. I am confident they will thrive during their time at the school.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Buxted CofE Primary school to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 125 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	56	25	42	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	53	28	47	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	42	28	47	6	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	44	30	51	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	53	26	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	46	27	46	5	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	47	28	47	3	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	47	22	37	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	47	25	42	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	47	25	2	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	54	24	41	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	69	16	27	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	64	20	34	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buxted CofE Primary School, Buxted

TN22 4BB

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all the things you do. We looked at many things and have judged that you attend a good school.

Here are some of the things we found.

- The headteacher and staff know how well you are doing, and have made sure that the things that need to improve are being tackled.
- Almost all of you enjoy coming to school, as lessons are interesting and you help choose the topics you study; you like working in teams and on your own.
- Your attendance is high; well done for being at school so regularly.
- The good teaching and your behaviour mean that you learn well and by the end of Year 6, almost all of your skills and knowledge are above average.
- Those of you who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by the teachers and assistants, so that you make good progress.
- You are exceptionally confident about what you can do to stay healthy, and you enjoy the opportunities to do sports and exercise.
- You know how to stay safe, and almost all of you feel you can talk to someone if you feel worried; you told us that behaviour is usually good.
- You like helping around the school and enjoy making your community an even better place to live, like the 'welly walk' you have been working on.
- You have good opportunities to find out about the real world, such as your trip to the Bank of England; you also enjoyed singing at the O2 arena.

Even though it is a good school, the headteacher and other staff want to make it even better. We have asked the school to do two things.

- Make the teaching even better by teachers not spending too long explaining the tasks but letting you get on with your work as soon as you know what to do, and responding to the comments they make when marking your work.
- For those of you in Reception, making sure that the teachers look carefully at the work you have done, to plan more things for you to do and to help your parents and carers to support you.

Most of all, you should continue to enjoy your learning and being a positive part of your school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders Lead inspector

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