

Buckfastleigh Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113192
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357285
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geoff Woods
Headteacher	Nick Banwell
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2008
School address	Bossell Road Buckfastleigh Devon TQ11 0DD
Telephone number	01364 643304
Fax number	01364 642296
Email address	admin@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2011
Inspection number	357285

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons were observed and nine teachers were seen. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents and carers and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed 75 questionnaires from parents and carers, 13 from staff and 83 from pupils.

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

- How successful staff are in challenging more able pupils.
- How sharply targets are defined to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- The extent to which the curriculum is enriched to support pupils' learning.
- How closely the governing body are involved in monitoring the work of the school.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than others of the same type. It serves the local village and surrounding area. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found in other schools, but above average in the classes for the oldest pupils in the school. The school provides support for a number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small minority coming from other ethnic heritages. Pupils in the school are currently taught in seven classes. The school holds the Devon Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

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?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Strong leadership has enabled improvement to be made in all areas of educational provision so that the school is in a good position to keep improving.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they are taught well. Throughout the rest of the school, satisfactory teaching ensures pupils make satisfactory progress and attain average levels by the end of Year 6. The establishment of a stable and enthusiastic team of teachers and teaching assistants since the last inspection has boosted the quality of teaching across the school. Much good teaching is now in evidence and this, in turn, is having a marked impact on improving the progress that pupils make. All pupils show positive attitudes and both their behaviour and attendance are good. Pupils get on well with each other and the staff.

A good and improved curriculum provides a rich range of activities that is engaging pupils' interests well. Where the teaching is good, activities are provided that precisely match the needs of all groups of pupils and clear targets are set for individuals. However, there are occasional lessons where the needs of more able pupils are not met fully. Also, in some classes, the targets set for pupils are not always as clear as they could be to ensure pupils understand the next small steps needed to help them improve their work. Pupils' attainment in writing and in mathematics has improved. This is as a result of good initiatives to engage them more in talking about their ideas prior to writing them down, and in using and applying their mathematical skills more in practical situations. These approaches are not yet fully embedded in all classes. This means that pupils are not always progressing as rapidly as they could do with improving their writing and mathematical skills.

Staff know pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs. They are good at supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently these pupils make good progress. The strong pastoral care provided for pupils is much appreciated by parents and carers, who feel their children are well looked after. The caring atmosphere that pervades the school ensures that pupils become confident learners who enjoy the work and activities provided. All pupils spoken to agreed with the statement made by one that, 'Our school is a happy and friendly place to be.' All pupils feel safe and confident to seek help from staff. The organisation of the weekly family-singing sessions is one example of the many ways that pupils make good contributions to the school and local community. However, the school does not do enough to engage with community groups further afield so as to give pupils the opportunity to learn how people from other cultures lead their lives.

The headteacher provides strong leadership. He has been particularly successful in establishing a strong team spirit. His work and that of the staff team are held in high esteem by the parents and carers, who express much praise for the school's improvement

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

over recent times. Staff and the governing body work well together and have a good understanding of the priorities for development, based on their rigorous evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good actions for improvement are in place and are increasingly effective as they become fully embedded. This is accelerating the rate of improvement in pupils' achievement. These factors, set alongside the energetic approach and strong commitment of staff, mean that there is a good capacity for improvement to continue. The satisfactory achievement of pupils means that the school currently achieves satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or better by December 2011 through ensuring:
 - that work set consistently challenges more able pupils in all lessons
 - targets set for pupils always clearly indicate the small steps needed to help them improve their work.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by December 2011 through ensuring that:
 - they always have sufficient chances to articulate their ideas before writing them down
 - they always have a full range of opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- By December 2011, improve pupils' awareness about how people from different cultural backgrounds lead their lives through making good-quality links with communities further afield.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Although it varies from year to year, children's attainment is broadly below the levels expected for their age, with language and mathematical skills being particular areas of weakness. Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and reach average levels by the time they start Year 1, with a minority achieving above average.

There are further examples where pupils' progress and achievement are good across the school. For instance, in a lesson for Years 1 and 2, pupils worked enthusiastically, creating good quality questions in preparation for a famous celebrity coming to visit the school. Also, in a lesson for Years 3 and 4, pupils grouped by ability all worked at a good rate with challenging mental calculations. The school has been successful over the last two years in improving attainment in English and mathematics and in eradicating any previous underachievement. Learning and progress are satisfactory rather than good because work is sometimes too easy for more able pupils. Also, in some year groups, pupils do not learn to write as fluently and confidently as they could do. Similarly, while in some classes pupils make good progress with learning to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical and problem-solving activities, such skills are not uniformly apparent in all classes.

Many examples were noted of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities responding well to the strong support they receive and making accelerated progress with improving their reading, writing and number skills. Through overcoming behavioural

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

difficulties and developing a more confident and enthusiastic attitude to learning, a few pupils have made outstanding progress.

All pupils are polite and friendly throughout the school. Through work in assemblies, lessons and charity fundraising, pupils gain a sensitive awareness to the world around them. They conscientiously carry out their responsibilities such as being school council members and as helpers at break times and assemblies. Through these and other activities, they gain good social awareness and a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils gain sound basic skills to help them progress in the future. Through working towards the Devon Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark, as well as the good focus in their personal, social and health education lessons, pupils gain a strong awareness about how to stay healthy and fit. They participate in a good range of sports and eat healthily at lunchtimes and breaks. Pupils gain a good knowledge about British culture through their work and local activities, but their knowledge of, and engagement with, people from cultures different from their own is limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and provide lively and interesting lessons. Pupils appreciate this and respond by working hard. Those spoken to mentioned, 'Teachers make our lessons fun, so it's never boring at school.' An outstanding Year 5 mathematics lesson illustrated this point well, with the teacher using images on the interactive whiteboard in a

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

very skilful way to enliven the presentation and make ideas as clear as possible. Teachers use a good variety of strategies to keep pupils focused, for example getting pupils to discuss ideas quickly with a partner or sketching ideas or calculations on mini whiteboards during whole-class sessions.

Teaching is satisfactory rather than good because, sometimes, work set for the more able pupils is too easy. Also, while in some classes new approaches, such as using the 'Talk for Writing' strategy and getting pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical work, are making a real difference in improving pupils' progress, this is not consistently the case in all classes. Teaching assistants work well. They show a skilful and sensitive ability to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, with a keen sense of when to support and when to allow pupils to move ahead independently. Teachers use assessment information well to group pupils and plan their lessons, although work is not always adapted well enough for those who learn quickly. They monitor pupils' work effectively and adjust their planning where needed, based on their observations. However, in some classes, targets set are not sufficiently clear to ensure pupils know precisely what is needed for them to progress to the next level in their work.

The curriculum is enriched well by trips and visitors to the school and the good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are motivated and inspired by visits organised for them to meet famous sports personalities. Strong links with other local schools are also boosting pupils' learning, for example through the use of extra sports coaches. Pupils gain considerably from provision for their personal development. The well- focused approach to personal, social and health education work ensures all learn to keep safe, become healthy and develop a pride in their work.

Staff are vigilant in all matters concerned with ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. Through very effective staff support and good use of expertise from external agencies, the school has been successful in helping individuals with complex social and emotional problems overcome their difficulties and stay on track with their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

The headteacher inspires much enthusiasm and strong commitment within the staff team. Since the last inspection, they have come to share a clear purpose and vision for the school's development. Subject leaders have a very clear overview and work well with colleagues in driving forward action plans to improve teaching and learning. Concerted actions to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes and ongoing actions to improve the teaching of writing and mathematics are showing clear impact. As a result, an increasing

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

proportion of pupils are beginning to achieve well. The school sets itself challenging targets to ensure that improvement is sustained. Robust systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the school's work along with clear assessment systems to track pupils' performance. This means that staff and the governing body keep a close eye on ensuring that provision constantly seeks to provide the best opportunities for all individuals and groups of pupils and that no discrimination occurs.

The governing body are fully involved in all aspects of promoting the school's drive for improvement. Governors work well in not only supporting the headteacher and staff, but in ensuring that they are challenged and held to account when required. The governing body fulfil all of their statutory requirements and ensure that good safeguarding procedures are enacted. Safeguarding principles are well embedded within the curriculum so that pupils gain a firm understanding about how to keep themselves safe. High priority is given to ensuring that all policies, such as those to do with child protection, are up to date and fully implemented. Procedures for assessing risks are strong, with follow-up actions applied swiftly where required. Good systems are in place to involve parents and carers in supporting their children's learning. The school provides them with full information about their children's progress. The school has strong links with other local schools and a range of partner organisations and uses these well to boost pupils' learning.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily and usefully surveys parents' and carers' views about the impact of its work. Good efforts are made to work with the local community. However, plans for future actions to promote community cohesion are not as detailed as they could be, especially in respect of forming community links further afield so as to boost pupils' awareness of how people from other cultural backgrounds live.

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good induction procedures ensure that they settle in and achieve well in all areas of learning. Teachers and teaching assistants know the children well and cater fully for their individual needs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well. Strong support ensures they become confident learners and thereby accelerate their learning, especially with communication, language and literacy work. Staff manage the children very well so behaviour is good. There is a vibrant and busy atmosphere within the classrooms, with children fully engaged and trying hard with all tasks. The strong pastoral support ensures that all individuals feel safe and develop as happy learners.

Teaching is good, with tasks well planned to match the needs of different abilities. Children progress well because there is much opportunity for them to develop their understanding through exploring ideas in practical situations. For example, children were noted building their ideas and language well through the enjoyable activities in the role-play area. Also, good teaching of letter sounds helps all individuals make good progress with recognising and using simple words. There is a good range of indoor and outdoor resources to support children's learning. These are set up well to maximise learning opportunities. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for children to work more extensively in the outdoor area so that chances to accelerate their progress in physical development are not always fully exploited.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed and runs smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Accurate self-evaluation, along with excellent systems to regularly check and record children's progress, mean that staff have a clear view on what is working well and where they can make further improvements.

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

Parents and carers are very pleased with the school's work and its recent improvement. Many accolades were given to the work of the headteacher. The very positive comments included, 'The headteacher and his staff have done a wonderful job improving the school with their hard work and commitment' and 'Not only do they offer good education but the all-round ethos of the school is one of a caring, stimulating environment.' These comments were typical of many others received. A very small minority of parents and carers feel that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress.

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

The inspection team noted good systems to keep the parents and carers informed about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Buckfastleigh 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 203 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	72	20	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	69	22	29	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	65	19	25	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	55	30	40	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	64	26	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	60	27	36	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	53	31	41	3	4	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)	41	55	27	36	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	55	31	41	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	57	27	36	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	65	24	32	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	61	81	14	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	73	20	27	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buckfastleigh Primary School, Buckfastleigh, TQ11 0DD

Thank you for making us feel welcome in your school. You were very polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you. We have judged that yours is a satisfactory school. There have been lots of improvements made recently. Through discussions we had with you and the survey that some of you completed, we can see that there are many things that you like about your school and you enjoy being there.

Here are some of the good things that we found in your school.

- The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gets you off to a strong start at school.
- You are fit and healthy and know a lot about how to stay this way.
- Satisfactory teaching helps you to improve your work and reach the expected levels. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on well with each other.
- You all have a very good understanding about how to work and play safely. The adults in the school are good at taking care of you.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have done a good job of helping the school improve and have good plans to keep this improvement moving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now:

- ensure that those of you who learn quickly are always given challenging work
- improve your writing by giving you more chances to talk about your ideas before you write about them
- improve your work in mathematics by giving you more chances to practise and extend your mathematical skills in practical activities
- provide you with more opportunities to learn about how people from other cultures live their lives.

You can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.