

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123145
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359371
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Mclean
Headteacher	Louise Warren
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2011
School address	Summerside Road Buckland, Faringdon Faringdon SN7 8RB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed four different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, provision for safeguarding (the system to care for and protect pupils), the school development plan, the attainment and assessment of pupils' progress, the governing body minutes and school policies. They analysed responses from 51 parent and carer questionnaires and other written responses from pupils and staff.

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

- How consistent is the progress and attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1?
- How effective has the school been in improving the quality of the provision in Key Stage 1?
- How effective are the measures taken by the school to improve attainment in mathematics, especially that of more-able pupils?
- How involved is the governing body in monitoring the performance of the school, in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, and in its self-evaluation?

Information about the school

Buckland Church of England Primary is much smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average, the largest group having specific learning difficulties. All classes in the school are of mixed-age groups. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

A privately funded pre-school group of children joins the school's Reception class every morning. During this time, the children are under the care of the school staff, headteacher and a pre-school assistant. There is a daily breakfast club which is held in the nearby village memorial hall. This was visited during the inspection. The hall is also used by the school for a variety of activities including physical education and drama productions. There is a privately run after-school club which takes place daily on the school site. The headteacher was new to the school in September 2009, after there had been several headteachers in a short time. Several new members have been appointed to the governing body recently including the appointment of a new chair. The school holds Healthy School status and the Activemark award.

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

Buckland Church of England Primary is a good school. It has a number of strengths, foremost being the leadership and management of the headteacher. Her leadership, combined with the efforts of a willing and enthusiastic staff, has guided the school's improvement. The school's progress is accelerating after some instability in the senior leadership of the school in recent years. The school provides a high standard of care, guidance and support for all pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, show great enjoyment of school, reflected by their consistently high attendance. They have good attitudes to learning, and are fully involved in their school and the local village community. They also have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and are unanimous in saying that they are safe, and act safely in school. Their parents and carers agree with this and have excellent engagement with the school at all times. Typical of the many positive comments made by parents about the school is;

'My child feels strongly that her opinions and ideas are listened to, and that she plays a valued role in the life of the school. Any issues raised are dealt with sensitively and promptly by an outstanding headteacher.'

There have been significant improvements in the progress, achievement and attainment of pupils in their learning, especially that of more-able pupils. Pupils' learning is enhanced by an exciting and innovative curriculum which offers them many memorable experiences both in and out of school, and is designed effectively to meet the different needs of each pupil.

The school's self-evaluation of its performance is realistic and accurate, and based upon a wealth of detailed evidence of solid progress. The much-changed governing body is now playing a full part in guiding and evaluating the performance of the school. This picture of a rapidly improving school indicates a good capacity for future sustained improvement.

Children make a good start to their learning and personal development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many of them benefit from the opportunity of joining the Reception class prior to the school's entry age and mixing with older children. Their good progress continues throughout all year groups so that, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils are reaching above average levels of attainment in English and mathematics, and some more-able pupils have high attainment. The rise in attainment in mathematics has been comparatively recent, and the school recognises that consistently high expectations of pupils and realistic but challenging targets must be sustained in all year groups, for attainment to be maintained. Teaching is consistently good across the school because teachers have 'raised the bar' in their expectations of the pupils, and have very good relationships with them. They provide an outstanding, stimulating and exciting curriculum. Better teaching has been helped by more rigorous monitoring and support for teachers,

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particularly by the headteacher. Although teachers set demanding targets for pupils, this has not yet led to consistently good standards of pupils' presentation of their work and accurate handwriting, across all subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the recent improvements in attainment and achievement in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teachers maintain consistently high expectations for the progress of the pupils.
- Implement a consistent approach to handwriting and presentation, so that pupils take the same care and accuracy in their work across all subjects of the curriculum.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils respond positively and enthusiastically to stimulating and well-planned teaching. They behave well in and outside classrooms, enabling good learning to take place in rooms which are sometimes quite crowded and cramped. Pupils enjoy their learning which is reflected in their high attendance. They particularly enjoy opportunities for independent research and can often be seen fetching a laptop to further their learning. They also benefit from extending their vocabulary in lessons, always being willing to contribute, such as pupils in the Year 1/2 class who offered 'stomping' and 'carnivore' in their discussions on character descriptions.

Pupils agree unanimously with their parents and carers that they are safe in school, and that all of them act safely and sensibly in their different activities. They enjoy numerous opportunities for sport and were delighted to reach the area soccer final during the inspection. They have a very good knowledge of healthy lifestyles, and a good majority of them take the school lunches, which they enjoy eating in family-style groupings. Their contribution to the school community and locally is excellent. Older pupils regularly help to serve at a monthly community lunch and also help with the village toddler group on a regular basis.

Attainment in mathematics, while being slightly above average at the end of Year 6, still gave cause for concern, and the school has taken further decisive action. This has included a more effective use of assessment data for the setting of challenging targets, and the appointment of a new mathematics leader. The attainment of more-able pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, was of particular concern. There is now substantial evidence to show that a significant number of pupils are reaching above average levels of attainment throughout all years in reading, writing and mathematics. A large majority of pupils are making good progress in their learning and achieving well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils have good basic skills, know how to take the initiative and take on responsibilities, and are being well prepared for their future lives.

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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	1
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	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?

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and a good understanding of their differing needs. Teachers' expectations of what their pupils can learn and understand are rising and becoming more consistent across the whole school. Consequently, the challenge to pupils in their targets, especially for the more able, has increased and pupils are encouraged to develop more independence and ambition in their learning. Teachers' questioning skills are good and pupils are able to reach good standards of speaking involving lengthy and articulate answers. An example of this was observed in the Year 5/6 class when pupils analysed what makes a high quality piece of writing, naming the correct use of tenses and the use of higher-level connective words. Teachers use assessment and pupil tracking data more effectively than in the past and have a continuous and accurate picture of the progress of the pupils. Their marking of work is generally helpful, although there are examples of pupils being overloaded with advice. However, teachers place insufficient emphasis on pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work, which is variable in all classes, especially in subjects other than English.

The school provides a high-quality curriculum which leads to very positive outcomes in pupils' learning throughout the school. This is reflected, for example, in the excellent moral and social outcomes for pupils. The school is particularly successful in providing many good extra-curricular opportunities and visits and visitors for pupils. Pupils talk with

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considerable enjoyment about being shown a horse's heart in science, and the lengthy residential visits enjoyed by all pupils in Key Stage 2. During the inspection, 24 pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen learning the guitar, which was followed by a Tudor workshop when they were able to use quill pens and write in medieval English. The curriculum is also personalised for the needs of all pupils, such as the pupil nurture group which gives small numbers excellent learning activities suited to their needs. The school is also developing a wider range of opportunities for its pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented. Good partnerships are used to expand and enrich the curriculum, and parents and carers, staff and outside providers are all involved in the many interesting and well-supported clubs provided by the school.

There is a strong ethos of care and support for all pupils and excellent relationships throughout the school. Teaching assistants make effective well-planned interventions for the benefit of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils in potentially vulnerable circumstances. Parents and carers particularly are grateful for the support the school offers during times of difficulty. Links with a range of outside services and agencies are very effective. The provision of the well-attended breakfast club contributes positively to the needs of pupils.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher gives exceptionally strong and aspirational leadership to the school, and makes no secret of her ambition that she wants Buckland to be an outstanding school. Other leaders and staff share her determination that pupils should receive a high quality of care, and that consistent teaching will lead to ensuring all pupils reach their potential in their learning and personal development. Good progress has been made towards these goals in the last 18 months, and leaders are benefiting from the support and guidance of the headteacher in developing their skills. For example, the monitoring of teaching and learning is now being shared by leaders, and all staff are joining in regular, rigorous reviews of pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets. The governing body recognises that in the past it has been insufficiently proactive. It has several highly motivated new members and a new chair who are taking a more active role in challenging leaders and managing school priorities. The governing body ensures that safeguarding policies are effective. Governors realise the need to ensure up-to-date training, especially in the light of their control of safety matters in the forthcoming development of the accommodation.

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The school promotes equality of opportunity well, and has been successful in ensuring that some underachievement of higher-attaining pupils in mathematics has been tackled so that these pupils now make good progress. The school has a good range of partnerships, especially with the Faringdon group of schools, the local community college and a neighbouring independent school. Engagement with parents and carers is excellent. There are a range of communication strategies including e-mail, all parents and carers attend parent nights, and teachers and the headteacher are available daily before and after school. There is also a very supportive 'Friends of Buckland School' (FOBS) group. The contribution to community cohesion is well promoted by the school, especially through the Comenius project, which pupils talk about enthusiastically.

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	1
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	2
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

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

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Views of parents and carers

Over half of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaires, a return well above the average. Almost all were very positive about the school. All feel that the school keeps their children safe, that their children enjoy school, and that the school is led and managed effectively. Each question produced an approval rate in excess of 90%. Inspectors' views are similar. A typical comment is, 'This is a very warm, friendly and welcoming school where the staff creates a safe and happy environment in which the children can learn.' Very few parents and carers expressed concerns about the school. Inspectors followed these up and feel that the school manages behaviour well and gives parents and carers many opportunities to support their children's learning and express their views to the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 89 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	71	15	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	69	16	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	37	28	55	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	27	34	67	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	35	32	63	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	35	29	57	4	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	73	13	25	1	2	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)	22	43	27	53	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	29	32	63	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	43	24	47	4	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	37	29	57	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	80	9	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	53	23	45	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.



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buckland Church of England Primary School, Faringdon SN7 8RB

Thank you all for your very cheerful and polite welcome to us when we visited your school. We were very pleased that you enjoy school so much, and greatly enjoyed watching so many of you learning the guitar, and using those quill pens. It was good to hear how much you enjoy taking on responsibilities, especially the older pupils who help with the toddlers and at the community lunches in the Memorial Hall. You go to a good school and are very well cared for by all the staff. By the time you leave school, your attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and some of you are well above average. You make good progress in your learning, which is helped by a very exciting and interesting curriculum with all your visits to other schools and places of interest. You have good teachers and assistants who help you to do your best and are always there if you have a problem. Your school is led and managed well and we are pleased that your parents and carers think so too. We are especially pleased that you all think you are safe in school, and that you all know how to behave safely. The inspectors would like to congratulate you on your excellent attendance, perhaps showing how much you enjoy school!

We have suggested to the school leaders ways in which the school can continue to improve. First, we want your teachers to continue to set you high targets in mathematics so that you can all reach better standards in every year group. Second, some of you could improve your handwriting and the presentation of your work, which is not always the best that you can do. We have asked your teachers to keep reminding you of this, but we think it is really up to you to make sure your written work is always a credit to you.

All of you can play a big part in helping the school to continue to improve. The first thing for you to do is to win that football Cup Final!

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite

Lead inspector

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