

Bushey Manor Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117242
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	358112
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Graham Preston

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosanne Tomalin
Headteacher	Peter McCreadie
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed eight

- teachers in 17 lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including that relating to safeguarding practices and the school's self-evaluation and development planning. They also considered the questionnaire responses from 133 parents and carers and 99 pupils.

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

- The extent to which the school tracking and other data indicate that all pupils now make good progress.
- How far teaching and assessment have improved since the last inspection.
- The degree to which changes in school leadership and governance have aided school improvement.

Information about the school

Bushey Manor Junior is an average-sized school that mainly draws its pupils from Oxhey and Bushey near Watford. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with an increasing proportion from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds. A growing number of pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The school provides facilities for a separately run breakfast club. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Activemark and Eco-Schools awards. There has recently been a change in headteacher.

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

This is a good and improving school. Consecutive headteachers have worked with the governing body and colleagues to establish a largely new and effective team of teachers and support staff. Together, these have successfully focused on establishing good practice resulting in improved standards and pupils' progress. Parents and carers have increasingly recognised these strengths in what is now a popular and well-regarded school.

Pupils make good progress over their time in school and attain standards significantly above the national average, particularly in mathematics. Detailed school tracking indicates that all years, and groups of pupils within those years, are progressing well. Well-planned support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do as well as others, while pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition often make significantly better progress as they rapidly acquire language skills. The school has worked hard to establish a positive learning context in which pupils feel exceptionally safe. Behaviour is almost always good and often exemplary. Attendance is above average and there is a readiness to work with others and grasp opportunities to actively participate in lessons. Many pupils take responsibility and demonstrate a commitment to healthy lifestyles through their high level of participation in various sports and physical activities.

Teachers and support staff work together effectively to plan and deliver lessons that have a clear learning purpose and successfully engage pupils' interest. Relationships with pupils are good and teachers make effective use of information and communication technology (ICT), including the use of multimedia and the interactive whiteboards to enhance pupils' learning experience. However, at times overlong teacher-led activities reduce the amount of time for pupils to work individually and in groups. Marking is mostly good and has been particularly successful in showing pupils how well they are progressing against National Curriculum levels. The best practice shows pupils what they need to do next to improve further, but this is not used consistently across the school. Considerable efforts have been made to devise a more interesting curriculum that provides a good balance between developing pupils' literacy and numeracy and enabling more practical and creative work. The range of residential visits and extra-curricular activities is exceptional.

Care, guidance and support are strong overall. Pupils with particular concerns are well supported and provided with their own personal education plans that help them make good progress. The success in working with the separate infant school to help pupils' transition to the junior school has contributed to the current position where all parents and carers now choose to transfer their children to Bushey Manor Junior School

The headteacher has been very successful in building on the good work of his predecessor who helped establish a largely new team of teachers and support staff. The current headteacher has developed school leadership at all levels, established rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and considerably strengthened the school's safeguarding arrangements.

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

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While the governing body is supportive and the key members well informed, its role is undeveloped in a number of respects. Most other aspects of leadership and management are strong. The school engages parents and carers well and has well-established partnership links that underpin the good provision for care and the curriculum. However, cultural cohesion is work in progress in terms of the range of links and recognition of diversity in school. Nonetheless, the school is well led and has improved considerably in recent years through a process of rigorous self-evaluation and readiness of all staff to be actively involved in its development. This indicates good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching and assessment more consistently reflects the best practice in the school by:
 - providing a better balance between teacher-led and pupil-centred learning
 - regularly informing pupils what they needed to do next to improve their National Curriculum levels.
- Improve school governance by:
 - improving communication with parents and carers
 - more closely involving governors in the life and work of the school
 - ensuring that all governors are sufficiently well trained.
- Improve pupils' contact and awareness of the modern British and global community by:
 - celebrating the growing religious, cultural and ethnic diversity of the school
 - establishing more national and international links.

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

All but a few pupils reach the expected attainment level in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 which considerably exceeds the local county and national standard. A higher than average proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 5 standard. This represents good progress over their time in school, with most pupils doing better than the national expectation of making two National Curriculum levels progress during their time in junior school.

Learning in lessons reflects this positive picture. The two Year 6 classes are broadly grouped by ability for mathematics and, in one lesson seen, the more-able pupils could confidently simplify and convert decimals and fractions. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils were able to use more complex connectives and literary devices in their story writing. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, a pupil with special educational needs was making good progress in writing a play script helped by a personalised learning plan. Scrutiny of Year 6 English workbooks showed the good progress pupils make when learning English as an additional language, with little difference from their peers in the accuracy and complexity of expression.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, and social development is very evident in their growing confidence and maturity and readiness to participate in lessons. Pupils have a growing

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awareness of different cultures that is in the process of being strengthened by the school. There are occasional lapses in concentration in some lessons but, overall, pupils behave well and show a readiness to listen to each other. Many of the pupils are able to demonstrate healthy lifestyles by their active involvement in sports and understanding of healthy eating. Above average levels of attendance reflect their enjoyment of school and many pupils embrace opportunities to be actively involved in eco-school initiatives, charity fund raising and as play leaders, office helpers and school council members.

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	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	2
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?

Lessons are mostly well planned with a clear purpose shared with the pupils. Learning is organised well and good use is made of teaching assistants to support learning in groups. Most lessons are challenging and often encourage pupils to work

- together and individually, though on occasions teachers' presentations and explanations take up too much of the lesson. Good use is made of peer and self-assessment and marking is helpful in showing pupils what they have achieved.

Varied and interesting work schemes provide opportunities to improve literacy and numeracy. Pupils benefit from skilled teaching in French, design and technology and ICT. The local sports partnership supports the school's teaching of physical education and provides regular sports events at the local secondary school. One excellent link enables all

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Year 4 pupils to learn how to play the violin. There are various 'fun' extra-curricular activities, such as street dance and speed stacking, and all pupils have a residential visit every year.

The positive outcomes in terms of pupil attitudes, attendance and behaviour all reflect the effective care and guidance provided by the school. Provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities pupils and any pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable is particularly strong. There are well-developed monitoring procedures with rapid intervention to address any concerns. Strong links exist with the various outside agencies to support this work and include family support, social care, speech and language and minority ethnic communities support.

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?

The positive impact of the headteacher and senior colleagues is evident in a school where morale is high and there is optimism for the future. The governing body is supportive and includes a number of very well-informed and committed members who are playing an increasingly important part in school improvement. However, inspection findings endorse the governing body's view that its governance is satisfactory. In its recent self-review, the governing body recognised the need to improve links with parents and carers, be more active in school and ensure all governors have up-to-date training. The very high and positive parent and carer questionnaire responses indicate effective engagement with parents and carers. This is based very much on positive daily face-to-face contact with teachers and the headteacher. There are also regular bulletins, consultations evenings and open days and an established text messaging service though the school is ambitious to do more, including use of email.

Safeguarding of children is robust with clear risk assessment procedures and security is greatly enhanced by the new perimeter fencing. The curriculum considerably helps pupils' cultural development but wider national and international links are modest and, given the inclusive nature of the school. There have been missed opportunities to celebrate the considerable range of ethnic and cultural diversity in the school. However, relationships in the school are positive and harmonious. A commitment to equal opportunity is evident in the careful tracking of all groups and individuals. This is used well to monitor the performance of all pupils and to intervene with additional learning and support to narrow any significant gaps in performance between those groups. Consequently, there are no significant differences in progress between girls and boys, between pupils with different social or ethnic backgrounds or particular learning needs.

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

Views of parents and carers

A very large proportion of parents and carers completed the questionnaire and 97% reported they were happy with their child's experience at school. A small minority of parents and carers would like to be better kept informed and two commented about the lack of email use by the school. Inspectors noted that the school made good use of a text messaging service to contact all parents and carers and, once they respond to the recent school request for their email addresses, it will introduce an email system. A few others felt that contact with governors was not always quick and effective. Inspectors looked into this and have made this one of the development points. Other parents and carers felt they were not kept informed of their children's progress, not helped to support their child's learning and, in some instances, felt their child was not making enough progress. Inspectors found that pupils made good progress in general and judged engagement with parents and carers to be good; that said, inspectors noted that the school is considering increasing the frequency of progress reports.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bushey Manor Junior 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 133 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	53	61	46	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	80	60	50	38	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	41	72	54	7	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	31	75	56	13	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	38	76	57	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	32	75	56	13	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	36	82	62	3	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)	43	32	72	54	7	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	31	81	61	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	32	78	59	9	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	32	72	54	7	5	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	53	40	73	55	4	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	44	70	53	3	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.



23 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushey Manor Junior School, Bushey WD23 2QL

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. It gives you a good education and ensures that you make good progress. The school makes considerable efforts to ensure you are safe, and you behave well and work together in lessons. We were also pleased with what the school is doing to help you develop healthy lifestyles and were very impressed that a large number of you take part in one or more sports activities and competitions. Also good is your willingness to take on different responsibilities as play leaders and helpers, or are involved in eco-school activities, or as a school council member. In our conversations with pupils, many of you said that you feel safe and enjoy the fun activities in some lessons.

The great majority of you like coming to school and attend regularly. It is certainly true that most of you get on with your teachers and want to do well. Your teachers make considerable efforts to plan interesting lessons that you enjoy. However, we found that interesting though the teachers presentations are, some of you need more time to work independently and with others in completing your classwork. Teachers are good at helping you understand the National Curriculum level you are working at and some tell you what to do next to improve. We think this 'next step' guidance is very useful and have asked the school to ensure all teachers do this. Finally, while lessons and assemblies help you know about different religions and cultures, we want the school to enable more of you to share your own different religious and cultural experiences and develop more links in the United Kingdom and abroad.

The headteacher, governors and staff do a good job at improving the school but we have asked the governing body to get more involved in the life of the school and for governors to have more regular contacts with your parents and carers. You can all play your part by maintaining your good attendance and taking an active part in lessons and school activities.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful on our visit.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston

Lead Inspector

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