

Bucklesham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124572
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380919
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Victoria Finch
Headteacher	Bryony Surtees
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 11 lessons taught by five teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils, and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring records, including the school's lesson observations, analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised responses to questionnaires returned by 78 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- What is the school doing to raise attainment and achievement in writing?
- What has been the impact of changes to the curriculum this term?
- How effective has the new headteacher been in driving forward improvement?

Information about the school

Bucklesham is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age Reception and Year 1 class. Other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes containing two year groups. The school has gained national Healthy Schools status and the Eco-Schools Silver award. The headteacher took up her post in April 2011, and a new Chair of the Governing Body has only just been appointed.

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

3

Main findings

Bucklesham provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The new headteacher has a strong vision that places pupils' learning at the heart of all the school does. She has clearly identified the school's strengths and what needs to be improved, and has introduced a wide range of measures to accelerate pupils' progress. These include a focus on raising standards in writing and a new creative curriculum. While it is too soon to see the full impact of these measures, standards in writing are rising this term and pupils say they enjoy the new approach. There is some variation in how effectively the new curriculum is being implemented, so that it does not always engage pupils sufficiently or take full account of their interests.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory from starting points that are generally typical for their age when they join the school. By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average, although they are stronger in mathematics than in English, and especially writing. Pupils are increasingly writing across a range of genres and different subjects, but this is not yet fully established. Pupils are beginning to evaluate the quality of their own and their classmates' writing but, again, this work is at an early stage. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are good examples, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children learn well. Teachers use questions well to probe pupils' knowledge and understanding and relationships are very positive in class. In the better lessons the pace of learning was brisk, but this was not consistent across the school. Teaching assistants work hard to support individuals and groups of pupils, but not all have had sufficient training to gain the expertise that enables them to help pupils make accelerated progress. The extent to which teachers' marking shows pupils how to improve their work varies, with good practice evident in Years 5 and 6. The quality of marking is uneven in other year groups.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are extremely considerate towards one another and polite and sensible, both in class and when moving around the school. Their enjoyment of school is evident in their outstanding attendance, and they have a good understanding of keeping safe, especially from the very fast traffic passing the school. Pupils take an active part in sports and run their own healthy tuck shop. They help to organise games on the playground. There are good links with the local community, including local churches, and pupils regularly entertain elderly residents to lunch. The school cares for pupils well, ensuring that their needs are met. All pupils are known as individuals by staff, giving the school a friendly, family atmosphere.

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The headteacher has set challenging targets for pupils' attainment and has brought in systems to measure their progress, holding staff more accountable. Strategic plans are carefully designed to drive forward improvement. Phase leaders are new to their roles, and only recently beginning to take an active part in monitoring. Some aspects of monitoring, such as observing lessons and checking books, while satisfactory, are not systematic enough to identify what is needed to achieve consistently good teaching and learning. The new Chair of the Governing Body has established good relationships with staff and is giving the governing body clear direction. She has identified improving the monitoring role of governors as a priority.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing by:
 - building on the successful new approach to teaching writing
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write across different subjects
 - involving pupils more in evaluating their own writing and that of others.

- Improve pupils' learning and their rate of progress by:
 - ensuring the pace of learning in lessons is consistent across the school, especially when pupils are working independently.
 - providing training for teaching assistants to increase their effectiveness
 - using marking consistently to show pupils how to improve their work
 - making the curriculum more exciting and relevant to pupils.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring monitoring by senior leaders is systematic
 - developing the role of phase leaders
 - improving the monitoring role of the governing body.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy school and achieve satisfactorily. They particularly like being involved in lessons in practical activities. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, took great pride in making periscopes and fitting the mirrors in place correctly. They could describe the action of light and how it travels in straight lines. In Years 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed interviewing 'Sir Isaac Newton' about his discovery of the force of gravity and testing out his theories by dropping objects of different shapes and sizes. At home they did some interesting research about famous scientists and wrote up accounts to read out in assembly. This cross-curricular approach to writing by teachers is becoming a more regular feature of pupils' learning, but is not yet fully established.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, like their peers. Appropriate support is provided for them, although sometimes the targets they are given are not specific enough to measure success accurately. Pupils benefit from the expertise of outside professionals and some of the support they receive from teaching assistants. The progress of different groups of pupils, including girls and boys, is similar, with no significant gaps in attainment.

Pupils say they feel safe in school, and parents and carers agree. In a significant contribution to the community, pupils have been canvassing the local authority to have the speed limit outside the school reduced, but have not yet achieved success. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through taking part in the school council, as playground leaders and house captains. They are well prepared for secondary school, developing good work habits and the personal qualities they need to succeed, as well as leaving with the expected basic skills. Their enterprise skills are well developed, working in teams to raise money for a schools’ dance project and running stalls at the Christmas and summer fairs. Visitors make a strong contribution to pupils’ spiritual development in assemblies and they embrace new experiences enthusiastically, such as taking part in drama and dance productions. They have first-hand experience of pupils from other cultures through their links with an urban school in Ipswich, and have established a link with a school in Grenada.

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	1
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	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn and always plan for

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

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different ability groups in mixed-age classes, so that generally the work is pitched at the correct level and offers an appropriate degree of challenge. At times the pace of learning slows when teachers do not check frequently enough the progress of pupils working independently to pick up any misconceptions or refocus their learning. Just occasionally higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In mathematics, in particular, problems are given a real-life context to interest pupils and give learning a purpose. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 received a letter from a well-known manufacturer of baked beans asking for their assistance I working out the area required in sheet metal to create a new-sized tin of beans. This involved pupils in finding the relationship between the diameter and the circumference of a circle. Assessment is satisfactory, but uneven across classes. Pupils are clearer about targets in writing than in mathematics. They are not always encouraged to respond to questions the teacher has added in their books when marking their work.

The headteacher has introduced a new curriculum this term based around areas of learning. It ensures broad and balanced coverage while offering topics that are of interest to pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, enjoyed exploring snowflakes as part of a 'fire and ice' theme and found out that, like themselves, they are all different. The curriculum is enriched by an appropriate mix of visits, visitors and clubs. While there are clear signs that the curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school, it is too soon to see its full impact on their attainment.

The pastoral care of pupils is good. The school can point to individual cases where pupils have overcome significant barriers to learning as a result of the support they have received. A sensitive approach ensures that pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are fully included in all activities and given every opportunity to thrive. Thorough systems have enabled the school to maintain outstanding levels of attendance.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has quickly made changes to improve the school's effectiveness and drive improvement at a rapid rate. These include drawing up a well-judged 'Raising Attainment Plan' each term that sets challenging targets for pupils and staff. The impact of this is to focus the attention of staff and the governing body on the key priorities that will accelerate learning. She holds meetings with teachers every

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half term to review the progress of pupils and to ensure that none are falling behind. This has increased the accountability of staff. She has introduced a new behaviour policy that has been welcomed by the school community and has ensured that behaviour is now outstanding. The headteacher has restructured the school’s senior leadership team to create phase leaders in order to distribute responsibility for monitoring the school’s work more widely. This is at an early stage but phase leaders are clear about their roles and are drawing up action plans for their areas, based on their evaluations. The governing body has seen considerable change in membership in recent weeks. Its effectiveness is satisfactory as new leadership becomes established. Monitoring of teaching and learning within the school is rigorous when it occurs but is not always systematic over time.

The school engages well with parents and carers, most of whom have welcomed the recent changes and speak highly of the school. A typical comment was, ‘We have thoroughly enjoyed the open-door policy, the friendliness of the teachers and administrative staff, the excellent communication to parents and the very pleasant learning environment.’ Parents’ and carers’ views are sought through a regular parents’ forum and they receive weekly newsletters. A flourishing school association raises considerable funds for the school. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. The headteacher is tackling vigorously areas of the school’s work that remain inconsistent. Safeguarding arrangements are good, with particular strengths in the role of the designated governor and extremely thorough induction procedures for all staff. The school promotes community cohesion well, reaching out effectively to its own community and ensuring pupils have direct experience of those from different cultures and backgrounds. They enjoyed the visit of a teacher from their link school in Grenada who was able to tell them about life in a very different part of the world.

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception Year settle quickly into the rich learning environment of their classroom and make good progress. Teachers plan activities that are stimulating and enjoyable, and often linked to a theme, such as the Arctic. Children had great fun exploring an ‘ice mountain’ and could describe what happened to it when they added coloured dye, or when they put the ice in warm water. Planning follows children’s own interests and keeps learning relevant for them. For example, some boys wanted a role-play ‘base camp’ from which they could launch expeditions, plan journeys and write lists of provisions. There is a good mix of activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves, who are growing increasingly independent. Children behave well, take turns and are beginning to sustain their concentration while working. A good focus on developing children’s early literacy and numeracy skills helps to prepare them for Year 1. This means children can count backwards and forwards with confidence, and recognise, for example, the number of sounds they hear when listening to a drum being struck.

Good leadership ensures that the adults work well together as a team and make careful assessments of the children’s progress. They compile observations in ‘learning journeys’ that build up a good picture of what children are doing, but do not always show parents how these link to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The leader has a good understanding of the areas to improve, and has already developed the outside area as an exciting place for learning.

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

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above average. Almost all said their children were happy at school and were prepared well for the future. A few queried whether the school helps them to support their child’s learning. Inspection findings indicated that the school works well with parents and carers and encourages them to become involved in supporting their child. Inspectors shared the views of parents and carers who commented on the dangers presented by fast traffic on the road outside the school, but responsibility for slowing the traffic does not lie with the school’s staff. Other individual views expressed by parents and carers were drawn to leaders’ attention in general terms and taken into account by the inspection team.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bucklesham 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 105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	67	24	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	71	18	24	4	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	37	49	34	45	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	44	35	47	5	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	56	27	36	5	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	40	53	26	35	7	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	51	34	45	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)	34	45	36	48	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	33	44	34	45	4	5	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	49	32	43	5	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	45	32	43	5	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	52	28	37	3	4	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	45	60	24	32	6	8	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bucklesham Primary School, Ipswich, IP10 0AX

Thank you for your help when we visited your school and for sharing your views with us. Bucklesham is a satisfactory school and, while there are things to improve, it does some things well. Here are some of its strengths.

- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you support each other very well.
- Your attendance is excellent.
- You are involved well in helping the school and the local community.
- Your knowledge of people from cultures and backgrounds different to your own is good.
- The school cares for you well, especially if you are having difficulties.
- The new headteacher has got off to a good start in improving the school.
- The youngest children enjoy school and make good progress.

For the school to improve even more we have asked your headteacher and other staff to:

- help you to do better in writing by giving you the chance to write in different subjects and by checking your own work and that of your friends
- help you make faster progress by making sure all your lessons interest you and marking shows you how to improve your work
- check you are doing well when working independently
- check the work of the school regularly to help it improve quickly.

All of you can help by telling your teachers what you enjoy learning.

Thank you once again for your help and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Lead inspector

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