

Buckhurst Hill Community Primary School

Lower Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 6DS

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has ensured that the school is good and improving. The headteacher is supported well by an increasingly effective senior leadership team.
- Leaders monitor closely the progress made by all groups of pupils. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and a wide range of other subjects, throughout the school.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent effectively.
- Governance is effective. The governing body arranged for its own practice to be reviewed and took appropriate action to address the weaknesses identified.
- Governors do not always ensure that their role remains a strategic one rather than operational. At times, the line becomes blurred and governors are too 'hands-on'. Governors do not routinely ask challenging questions of the school's leaders.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good throughout the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to ensure that pupils' needs are met.
- The early years provision gets children off to a good start. The early years leader has an accurate understanding of its strengths and the areas that need further development.
- Pupils behave very well throughout the school. Classrooms are orderly places where very little learning time is lost. Pupils are polite, well mannered and respectful.
- The vast majority of pupils feel safe at school. Bullying is rare and, when it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and appropriately by staff.
- Safeguarding is effective. The headteacher has greatly improved safeguarding procedures and the school is now a safer place as a result.
- The school's curriculum is not fully developed. It does not encourage a thirst for learning in pupils or motivate them to make rapid progress.
- Standards of presentation in pupils' exercise books vary across the school because some teachers' expectations are higher than others'.
- The school's approach to further improving the quality of teaching is not systematic enough.
- A very small number of parents remain dissatisfied with the school. Leaders have not communicated recent improvements to them clearly enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop leadership and management further, so that it has an even greater impact on improving the overall effectiveness of the school, by ensuring that:
 - the approach to monitoring the quality of teaching is sufficiently systematic, so that each monitoring activity has an impact on what happens in the classroom
 - all governors understand fully the strategic nature of their role
 - all governors ask appropriate and challenging questions in order to hold the school's leaders to account.
- Develop the school's curriculum so that it promotes excellent attitudes to learning and supports pupils to make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - the curriculum is motivating and inspirational
 - pupils are always provided with sufficient challenge
 - staff throughout the school have equally high expectations of what pupils produce.
- Improve communication so that parents are fully informed of the improvements taking place in the school, in order to restore the confidence of the very small minority of parents who remain dissatisfied.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The newly appointed headteacher is a strong leader. In the six months that she has been acting headteacher, she has done much to improve the school. The headteacher has focused on the right areas to ensure that pupils are safe and teaching is good. She has a very clear vision for how she wants the school to be and is absolutely determined that it will become outstanding.
- The school's new senior leadership team has established itself quickly. The leaders work very effectively as a team because they share the headteacher's vision and a common set of values. As a result, it is clear that the school is now good and improving. Pupils enjoy school, make good progress and behave well.
- Parents are largely happy with the school. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that they would recommend the school to others. Parents who spoke to inspectors at the beginning of the day said that they were happy with the school.
- Several parents commented positively about the recent improvements at the school. For example, one parent said: 'The new headteacher has a clear vision of what needs to be improved and has shown herself to be keen to work with pupils, parents and the local community in order to ensure that the school provides all the children with a full and stimulating curriculum.'
- Leaders have evaluated the school thoroughly. They have an accurate understanding of its strengths and have identified suitable areas for improvement. The self-evaluation summary links clearly with the school's short-term action plan.
- The pupil premium grant is spent effectively. The inclusion manager is now responsible for this area and has introduced a more systematic approach to how monies are spent. As a result, the funding is now having a greater impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- The primary physical education and sports premium is spent effectively. The school has a clear plan for how the funding will be used and what it is intended to achieve. The funding is spent in a range of ways, including paying for the school's subscription to a local school sports partnership. Membership of this group has increased pupils' access to sports competitions and other sporting activities. It has also provided staff with a range of development opportunities.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is led well. The special educational needs coordinator has an accurate understanding of where the provision is strong and where it still needs to improve. Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent effectively and, as a result, this group of pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are used increasingly well to promote pupils' development in these areas. During the inspection, pupils were seen to be respectful and thoughtful when reflecting

on the content of the assembly. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern British society.

- Leaders are aware that the school's curriculum is not fully developed. The curriculum is adequate and covers the full range of national curriculum subjects. However, it is not challenging and exciting enough to promote the outstanding outcomes and attitudes to learning that the school's leaders are aiming for.
- The school's approach to monitoring the quality of teaching is not systematic enough to be fully effective in improving the quality of teaching. A range of appropriate monitoring activities are carried out, such as observations of lessons and scrutiny of the work in pupils' exercise books. Areas for development are noted but these are not followed up during the next monitoring activity. Areas for development are not precise and specific enough to bring about rapid improvement.
- A small number of parents remain dissatisfied with the school. Most of the parents who gave negative responses expressed anxiety about the turbulence in leadership over the last few years. Some parents' expectations of how much information they should have been given about these changes are unrealistic. However, the school has not told parents enough about all the improvements that have taken place in recent months.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly committed. They have steered the school through a turbulent time, showing resilience and decisiveness. Governors have now ensured that stable, strong and effective leadership is in place.
- Governors arranged for a review to be carried out because they recognised that they were not as effective as they could be. Governors have worked hard on the issues identified and a subsequent review noted considerable improvement.
- Governors have benefited from the good support that it has received from the local authority. The voluntary improvement board, led by an adviser from the local authority, has modelled good governance techniques to the chair and the vice-chair well. These improvements are now starting to filter through to the rest of the governing body.
- Governors ensure that the pupil premium grant is spent effectively. The nominated governor has established a good working relationship with the inclusion manager, and monitors spending and the progress of disadvantaged pupils well.
- Governance has clearly improved but there is still work to do. Governors have, at times, become too 'hands-on', blurring the lines between their strategic role and an operational one. The minutes of governing body meetings do not show that governors routinely ask challenging questions of the school's leaders in order to hold them to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record of pre-employment checks meets all statutory requirements. A safeguarding review was carried out by the local authority in September 2016 and identified a large number of issues. The newly appointed

headteacher and the office manager have worked together to ensure that these areas for development have been addressed in full.

- A review of the school's child protection records, carried out by an external adviser at the school's request, revealed a wide range of gaps and inadequacies. The headteacher and the school's other designated safeguarding leads have worked together tirelessly to address the issues identified. As a result, child protection records are now robust and appropriate.
- Leaders have greatly improved the way child protection issues are reported and recorded. There is a much clearer system in place and staff now know what they should do if they have concerns about a child. Pupils are safer as a result of the actions taken.
- The school's designated safeguarding leads are well trained and have a good understanding of their role. They know the right action to take and the importance of doing so in a timely fashion. They are utterly committed to ensuring that pupils are safe in their care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils feel happy and safe in their classrooms, and this encourages a positive working environment.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They use praise and reminders consistently so that pupils know what is expected of them. This encourages pupils to remain focused on their work so that little learning time is lost.
- Phonics is taught well. Children get off to a good start in the early years and this is continued as they move into Year 1. Teachers are effective in encouraging pupils to use their knowledge of phonics to help them with reading and writing. Pupils blend sounds together to read unfamiliar words, and break words into their individual sounds in order to spell.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported increasingly well in classrooms. Staff are fully aware of who these pupils are and the challenges they face. Consequently, staff are planning to meet the needs of these pupils with increasing effectiveness.
- Teachers model tasks for pupils well. Pupils are able to complete tasks in a timely fashion because they have been shown what to do clearly. Teachers make their expectations clear so that pupils know what they need to do in order to be successful. Teachers' good knowledge of the subjects they teach enables them to explain clearly.
- Assessment is developing and is increasingly effective. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do to plan targeted work that meets individual needs. Teachers frequently help pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work closely and effectively with teachers. They are well informed about the pupils in the class and the work that they are expected to do with them. Teaching assistants are particularly effective in their work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils develop their writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers look for opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned in English lessons in subjects such as science

and history. This is effective in helping pupils to improve their writing skills.

- Some tasks that pupils are given do not provide sufficient challenge. Pupils are sometimes given worksheets and templates that limit the type of responses they can make. This does not allow pupils enough scope to deepen their understanding fully. Where this is the case, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' expectations of how pupils should present their work are not equally high throughout the school. In some classes, pupils' work is presented carefully, with neat and well-formed handwriting. In others, pupils' work shows less effort and is untidy, with lots of crossing out.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite and respectful. They are confident in speaking with adults and were keen to talk to inspectors about their school and their work. Pupils are helpful and well mannered, frequently holding doors open and offering help to others.
- The vast majority of pupils feel safe at school. They say that there is little bullying and, when it does happen, it is sorted out quickly by staff. The school's records show clearly that the headteacher has significantly improved the way that bullying allegations are dealt with. The approach is now more systematic and detailed records are kept, showing the actions taken.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They show an interest in what they are taught and try hard in lessons. Some pupils take care with their work and show pride in the work that they do.
- Pupils do not show a very strong thirst for knowledge. They do not have 'fire in their bellies', pushing them to want to learn more. The school's leaders have identified that this is because the school's curriculum is not sufficiently well developed to fully inspire and enthuse pupils.
- A very small number of pupils and parents expressed concerns about bullying and the school's approach to dealing with it. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns. However, it is clear that leaders have not publicised the improvements they have made in this and other areas. As a result, parents may not have all the information they need in order to be reassured about the care and safety of their children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well, both in their classrooms and during less-structured parts of the school day. Pupils know the school's rules and staff's expectations, and they behave accordingly.
- Leaders take a firm stance on attendance. They take prompt and decisive action to tackle pupils' absence, where appropriate. This is highly successful. As a result, overall attendance this academic year is similar to the national average.

- Absence rates for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have previously been a cause for concern. They are now similar to the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is now well above the national average, having previously been a concern.
- Poor behaviour is dealt with well. Incidents are recorded thoroughly and show clear and appropriate sanctions. The number of incidents has reduced and is low. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Under the previous national approach to assessment, the overall progress that pupils made by the end of key stage 2 had been well above the national average for several years. This dropped in 2015, although progress remained similar to the national average.
- In 2016, under the new assessment system, pupils made similar progress to other pupils nationally in reading and writing. In mathematics, the progress pupils made was well above the national average and among the highest in the country. Pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average in 2016.
- Standards in phonics are good. Results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have risen steadily and have been just above the national average for the last two years. This trend is continuing and another rise in the proportion of pupils who reach the level of the check is expected this year.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is small. Published data shows that the progress that this group of pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is similar to other pupils nationally. A greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils attained the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics combined than other pupils nationally in 2016. The school's current assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils make good progress throughout the school, confirming that additional funding is spent effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for well and monitored closely. Additional funding is spent effectively and, as a result, this group of pupils are making good progress throughout the school from their individual starting points.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress throughout the school. Leaders track their progress closely. Current assessment information shows that a good proportion of pupils are attaining above the expected level in every year group. Similarly, previously low-attaining pupils are catered for well and are making good progress.
- The work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' topic books show a range of writing opportunities. Pupils enjoy reading. They read confidently and competently at their own level.
- The progress that most pupils make is not rapid. Few pupils make the substantial and sustained progress necessary for them to develop excellent knowledge, skills and

understanding. As a result, outcomes are good but are not yet outstanding.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is led well. The early years leader has a clear and accurate understanding of its strengths and the areas that need to be developed. The provision is clearly good and improving. Safeguarding is effective and all other statutory requirements are met.
- Teachers plan carefully and use assessment information well. Teachers ensure that children are grouped appropriately and that teaching is pitched at the right level. As a result, children make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and abilities that are similar to other children nationally. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has increased over the last three years and has been above the national average for the last two years.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to form an effective team. Adults have high expectations of what children can do and how they should behave. Children learn the school's rules quickly and behave beautifully, both in classrooms and in the outside area. They persevere with activities and show very good attitudes to learning.
- A new online assessment has recently been introduced in early years. It is not yet fully established, particularly in terms of the involvement of parents in the progress that their children are making at school.

School details

Unique reference number	115052
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10033734

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	400
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samuel Judah
Headteacher	Natalie Marris
Telephone number	0208 505 7300
Website	www.buckhursthillprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@buckhursthill.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations set by the government for pupils' progress and attainment.
- There have been a number of leadership changes over the last three years. The school was led by an acting headteacher at the time of the previous inspection. A new substantive headteacher was appointed, and joined the school in September 2014. The current headteacher joined the school as deputy headteacher in September 2015, became acting headteacher in October 2016 and substantive headteacher in April 2017.
- The long-standing chair of governors left the school in July 2016. The current chair of the governing body took up his post in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of information to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. Inspectors observed parts of 16 lessons, some jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders, a representative of the local authority, a group of pupils and a group of governors.
- Inspectors looked closely at the work in pupils' exercise books, listened to them read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the playground as they brought their children to school. The views of the 80 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were taken into account.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's assessment information, records of leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in the school and a range of other documents.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Angela Savill	Ofsted Inspector
Rod Warsap	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Skeggs	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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