

# Inspection of a good school: Bushey Manor Junior School

Grange Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 2QL

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Inspection dates:

11–12 February 2020

## Outcome

Bushey Manor Junior School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have experienced a period of considerable staffing and leadership change. This has led to decline in their achievement. Pupils and parents and carers acknowledge that the school is now improving. They welcome the difference they can see since the new headteacher has arrived. Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils. They encourage pupils to do their best. However, many changes are recent. Pupils do not do as well as they should, because the curriculum is not fully developed.

Pupils love coming to the school. They enjoy positive relationships with adults. This helps them to feel safe while at the school. They told me that there is always someone you can talk to if you needed any help. Many parents agree that staff nurture and care for pupils well. As one parent commented: 'The well-being of children is clearly at the heart of the school.'

All the pupils know the school's values, 'Respectful, Responsible, Ready'. They demonstrate these through their mature attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They listen attentively to their teachers and each other.

Pupils attend a range of clubs, such as sports or art activities. They are proud to represent their school at singing events and competitions. This contributes well to their confidence and sense of belonging to the school community.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The new headteacher is taking decisive action to halt the decline in the school's performance. Staff feel trusted and supported by leaders. More training is being provided. This is helping teachers to improve the delivery of the curriculum. Many changes are quite recent. They have not yet had enough time to bring about the improvements that leaders intend.

Leaders have started to improve the curriculum. Leaders have organised the content of the curriculum so that pupils study a broad range of subjects. However, many plans lack precision. They do not include the order in which pupils need to know things to help them remember more. Where leaders have included the order in a few subjects, such as personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), these plans are new. Teachers' subject knowledge is not consistently strong to ensure that plans are taught well. Subject leaders are developing their roles. They are not yet able to evaluate how well their plans are working.

Standards in mathematics have not been high enough for some time. Leaders have reviewed the mathematics curriculum so that it is better planned. Teachers' subject knowledge is stronger. This is helping to improve pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. There is still more work to do to ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged, so that they think deeper about their learning.

Leaders promote the love of reading. Pupils talk about their favourite authors with enthusiasm. Pupils say teachers inspire them to read through class stories or book events such as 'a book at bedtime'. However, leaders' plans for teaching reading lack clarity. Different approaches to the teaching of reading are being used across the school. This means that teachers are not building on pupils' prior knowledge to develop their comprehension skills. As a result, pupils do not learn to read as well as they could.

The headteacher has changed arrangements for addressing the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Plans are more effective for identifying pupils' individualised needs. However, curriculum plans to ensure that work meets pupils' learning needs are still being developed. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well academically.

Pupils contribute to school life through roles such as mini mentors, eco warriors and school councillors. This is contributing well to how pupils learn to be tolerant and respectful of others. Pupils say that bullying does not happen often at their school. Pupils value the support they receive from adults. Pupils are confident that adults will resolve any of their concerns.

New governors have strengthened the governing body. They are working well with leaders. This is ensuring that leaders are doing the right things to improve the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strengthened the school's safeguarding systems. They have ensured that all staff have received training so that they are alert to any signs of risks to pupils' welfare. Safeguarding matters feature regularly in staff conversations. This ensures that those who have responsibility are taking the appropriate actions to keep pupils safe. There are some shortcomings in the information collected when concerns are recorded. However, this has not prevented leaders acting swiftly when responding to these concerns.

Leaders' checks on those employed by the school are thorough and well maintained.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- For many subjects, the curriculum is not coherently planned. Leaders' plans do not identify the key things pupils need to know and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. Teachers' expertise in the curriculum is underdeveloped in some subjects. Pupils do not learn well enough. Curriculum leaders need to develop their plans, so that pupils' learning is well sequenced in every subject. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to teach the curriculum successfully.
- Many subject leaders are developing their role. They have not developed the skills they need to evaluate their areas of responsibility. They do not understand how well pupils are learning by achieving the planned curricular goals. Leaders should provide time to develop the skills of curriculum leaders so that they contribute effectively to the improvement of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils read widely and for pleasure. However, the approaches to teaching reading are not the same across the school. There is not a coherent plan for the reading curriculum. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge of higher-order reading skills. Leaders must ensure that plans for reading provide information about what pupils need to learn at key times, so that pupils make stronger progress in reading.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Bushey Manor Junior School to be good on 21 March 2011.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117242
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121443
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	238
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dr Tony Breslin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Ann Cooper (Federation headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.busheymanorjm.herts.sch.uk/">http://www.busheymanorjm.herts.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 May 2016

## Information about this school

- In September 2015 the school became federated, in a soft federation, with Bushey and Oxhey Infant School. It became a hard federation on 1 September 2016, with one governing board. The new headteacher was appointed in September 2019 as the federation headteacher with responsibility for both schools. There is a single federation governing body.
- Bushey Manor Junior School and Bushey and Oxhey Infant School are registered separately with the Department for Education. Each school is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- In January 2020, additional capacity was added to the leadership team with an interim appointment of a federation deputy headteacher and a federation assistant headteacher. The interim appointments are for two terms.

## Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, I held meetings with the federation headteacher, who is also the designated leader for safeguarding and the federation school business and finance manager. I also met with the English, mathematics and PSHE leaders and staff to discuss the quality of education.

- I met with the seven governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with an external adviser to discuss their work and support for the school.
- Reading, mathematics and PSHE were considered closely to evaluate the quality of education. In each of these subjects, I carried out: lesson visits; discussions with staff and pupils; meetings with subject leaders; and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- I reviewed a range of school documents, including the school improvement plan, adviser visit notes and curriculum plans. To inspect safeguarding arrangements, I scrutinised records about safeguarding and spoke to staff and pupils. I considered attendance information and checked for any evidence of off-rolling or gaming.
- I considered 113 responses made by parents on Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 80 free-text responses. I also considered 20 responses to the staff survey and 57 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- I met with parents as they collected their children from the school at the end of the day.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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