



# Buckingham Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110329  
**LEA** Buckinghamshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 278408  
**Inspection dates** 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Sean O'Toole AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Foscot Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Buckingham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11		MK18 1TT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01280812864
<b>Number on roll</b>	552	<b>Fax number</b>	01280812806
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Janet Hornby
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jan Jones

<b>Age group</b> 2 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278408
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger-than-average school was formed in 2002 from the amalgamation of two schools on the same site. It is located in an area of socio-economic advantage although 25% of pupils come from mixed housing. About 6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. An average percentage (17%) has special educational needs. Most pupils come from White UK heritage backgrounds with a very small proportion having English as an additional language. One Chinese speaker is at an early stage of learning English. The school admits pupils from a wide range of settings into the Foundation Stage and 40% of pupils start at the school in Year 3. Attainment on admission is slightly above average. The school is involved in 'Educare' providing extended opportunities for pupils beyond the school day.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the senior management, governors, pupils and parents that this is a good school. The school makes outstanding provision for pupils' personal development and ensures that they receive high quality care, guidance and support. Provision for pupils with learning and physical difficulties is exceptionally good. The pupils thoroughly enjoy the stimulating and effective curriculum which is enriched by a wide range of activities. Standards are above average, having risen steadily in the last few years. Well focused assessment and constructive marking guide pupils on how to improve. Teaching is good and especially effective for the more able and those with learning difficulties. There is insufficient focus on good presentation, spelling and handwriting which accounts for some uneven progress in writing. Effective leadership and management have been successful in creating a committed team who are ambitious for the pupils' success. The school improvement plan sets the correct agenda but lacks precision in linking its aims to pupils' achievements. There is a good track record of recent improvement, such as raising boys' attainment, and the school demonstrates capacity to improve further. Staff and governors successfully fulfil the statement in the school's prospectus that, 'Everyone matters at Buckingham Primary School'.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

\* Improve the teaching of some aspects of writing, focusing particularly on pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation. \* Ensure that school improvement planning focuses more sharply on expected improvements in pupils' attainment.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Following a time of substantial disruption and high turnover of staff and pupils the school has raised standards and improved pupils' achievement which is now good. The school's concerns about uneven progress in previous years have been tackled by rigorous target setting and new initiatives to raise standards. The school successfully meets its challenging targets and standards are rising. Children thrive and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. By the end of the reception year most attain the expected goals for their age in the areas of learning. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is now good due to substantial support and intervention in extending teachers' expertise in teaching basic skills. The most recent test results show improvement on previous years and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Inspectors found that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation are not as good as they should be. Pupils with learning and physical difficulties benefit from high quality support and achieve very well. The good success achieved by gifted and talented pupils is the result of challenging work which stretches their thinking. Boys and girls are equally successful. The staff have successfully raised the attainment of boys by providing stimulating lessons which include good opportunities for practical

and creative work. Parents express some concern about the dip in motivation of pupils who are unsuccessful in the 11+ examinations which may account for a slightly slower rate of progress for these pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils respond excellently to the school's opportunities for personal development and they have very positive attitudes. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good. Pupils have an empathetic understanding of the values, traditions and beliefs of different groups and show great respect for others. Enthusiastic responses to music and art extend their learning and appreciation of worldwide communities. Pupils really enjoy school and their attendance is good. Behaviour is very good and pupils understand and value the way in which the staff encourage them to use the 'three golden questions' to assess their own behaviour and its effects. Pupils make good choices about health and safety. The new school meals are much appreciated and pupils apply their knowledge of healthy eating when choosing meals. They participate eagerly in physical activities. Pupils are proud of their success in influencing decision making in the school. Improved toilet facilities, better school meals and extended opportunities for homework are some of the successes instigated by the school council. Pupils work hard and see the relevance of acquiring skills in language and mathematics in order to be successful. Several pupils said, and inspectors agree that, 'This is a friendly school, where problems are quickly sorted out'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good and fosters positive attitudes amongst the pupils. They work hard and enthusiastically respond to homework especially when carrying out research into topics. One girl said, 'I love studying at home, especially working on history projects'. Pupils are attentive and interact well in discussion and debate, valuing others' opinions. Thorough planning and preparation linked to the good use of resources underpin most lessons and bring learning to life. In a good lesson in reception, the children enthusiastically recited then acted out nursery rhymes. A stimulating English lesson in Year 6 provided good challenge as the pupils developed their ideas about characters in a play. Support staff make a very good contribution to the self esteem of those with learning difficulties, prompting and encouraging with helpful comments so that all participate fully in lessons. More able pupils benefit from the challenges provided through grouping by ability and make good gains in their learning. Behaviour is managed very well. Teachers are especially good at marking work and providing guidance for pupils on how to improve. The pupils are complimentary about the support they receive. Most basic skills are taught thoroughly but there is room for improvement in promoting pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation of work. Sometimes pupils are too easily satisfied with work which does not reflect their ability.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum meets the needs of individuals very well and includes opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and use their initiative. Teachers encourage pupils to apply their basic skills in other subjects. In a good geography lesson in Year 2, pupils used a computer program to practise mapping using their literacy skills effectively. Physical development receives high priority. By employing a professional coach the school has raised the profile of gymnastics and other sports. The exciting and practical curriculum in the Foundation Stage promotes effective learning. Pupils enthusiastically attend the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. Parents play an active role in some of these activities, organising the lunchtime 'Beat Club' for music. Parents say that, 'The range of activities is so wide that pupils have difficulty in attending all they wish to'. Older pupils and parents excitedly describe the residential visits which contribute much to academic and personal development. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through strong teaching about relationships, opportunities to learn about the benefits and potentially damaging effects of drugs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Parents enthuse about a warm, friendly school that instils confidence in their children at every stage of their schooling. The care shown for all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is excellent and ensures that everyone has full access to the curriculum. The school has outstanding systems for child protection to ensure pupil safety and well-being. Links with outside agencies are most effective in providing additional support. Monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. The school's assessment and target setting ensure that pupils receive good guidance and understand how they can improve their work. Procedures to raise attendance have brought good improvement. Parents comment that their children are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good overall and excellent in managing care. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and inspires her colleagues in their drive to raise standards. She is ably supported by senior managers. Staff make a cohesive and hard working team who embrace change in a desire to improve. A particular success has been the time allowed for teachers' planning whilst ensuring that their classes benefit from specialist teaching. Self evaluation is mostly accurate and well founded. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and hold senior staff to account. Parents are consulted regularly. Pupils feel very much part of the school and quote several examples of how the headteacher has responded to their suggestions. Strategic plans include appropriate priorities but the headteacher agrees that more rigour is

needed in including targets in the improvement plan which are linked to measuring pupils' performance, particularly in writing. The school has made good strides forward since it was opened and standards at the end of Year 6 have risen annually. Underachievement by boys was identified as an issue very quickly and effective measures were put in place to raise their attainment. Issues remaining from the legacy left from inspections of the previous schools have been tackled. The school is in a strong position to build upon its success.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit very much, especially talking to you and looking at your work.

We were very impressed with your behaviour and the friendly way in which you play together and care for everyone. You obviously enjoy school and take part enthusiastically in lessons as well as the interesting out of school activities. Our ears are still throbbing from the sound of the African drums! You worked hard, listened to other children and made lots of helpful comments in lessons. We agree with you that your teachers are very good at guiding you and providing helpful homework. Other adults who help in lessons are very good at supporting children who find some learning difficult and this means that everyone can join in.

The results you achieve in tests are improving and the standards of work are often better than we see in other schools. You could improve in some areas by trying harder to make sure that your spellings are correct and that your handwriting is neat and tidy. We have asked your headteacher and the governors to find ways of making the school's plans clearer.