



Bushey Heath Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117088
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 279981
Inspection dates 16 January 2006 to 17 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Raminder Arora LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Rutts
School category	Community		WD2 1SP
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02089503042
Number on roll	235	Fax number	02089500851
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Camilla Woods
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr. Steve Perrin

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 16 January 2006 - 17 January 2006	Inspection number 279981
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bushey Heath is an average size school set in an urban location with 235 pupils on roll. The profile of attainment on entry to school is changing from above average to near average for some year groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average, and a few pupils are learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school judges itself to be good but a period of recent considerable change involving staff and governors has adversely affected pupils' standards and their achievement. Pupils' achievements were high until 2003, but they have reduced in the last two years, and are now satisfactory. Parents are justifiably of the opinion that the school is well resourced and provides a stimulating, caring and safe environment for all pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The Foundation Stage is managed satisfactorily and children receive a sound start to their education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school, and a broad curriculum, which includes a good range of additional activities and experiences, adds to pupils' learning and enjoyment. As a result, pupils with differing needs, backgrounds, and talents make sound progress. Overall standards by Year 6 are above average but pupils do considerably better in English than in mathematics and science. Assessment procedures are well established. However, more challenge for some pupils in lessons and a consistent approach to marking, which supports pupils' understanding of how to improve, would help them achieve even better. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy-head provide the school with a clear direction, which is focussed on raising standards. However, teaching quality needs monitoring more rigorously to help make it consistently good. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. It has made many improvements since the last inspection. The school is securely placed to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and science by placing more emphasis on problem solving and investigations and raising the level of challenge for the more able pupils.
- Improve the quality and consistency of marking and assessment to maximise pupils' progress.
- Evaluate the work of teachers more rigorously to make teaching and learning consistently good.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The school judges achievement as good, but the high achievement of pupils up to 2003 has not been sustained. There are however indications that the corner has been turned and improvements are underway. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies but has generally been above average. Children make satisfactory progress on starting school, and by the end of the reception year, the majority reach or exceed the expected goals for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the rest of the school, although standards vary because of differences in their attainment on entry. Year 2 test results have fallen considerably from the exceptionally high level in 2003 to broadly average in 2005. In Year 6, overall standards are above average, although they have again,

fallen from a high point in 2003. Pupils make good progress in English where standards are exceptionally high and large numbers exceed the level expected for their age. Pupils have a keen interest in reading and sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects. The school also met its challenging target for English. However, pupils' progress is only satisfactory in mathematics and science by Year 6 and standards are broadly average. Basic number skills are well developed but there are few opportunities for the pupils to apply these to investigations and problem solving. Similarly in science, not enough is done to develop their skills in devising and carrying out experiments. The school failed to achieve its reasonably challenging target for mathematics in 2005, indicating that a small but significant number of pupils did not achieve all that was expected of them. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from support and teaching that focus on their particular learning targets. They make satisfactory progress as do the small number whose first language is not English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation that pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The nursery and reception children quickly settle into the school routines and become happy and keen learners. They increasingly show that they can make informed choices and decisions about their work. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. They particularly like the extra-curricular clubs and other activities of interest. Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. Relationships are strong and highly productive. Pupils support each other very well within their 'family groups' and at other times. They have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and an appreciation of the beauty of nature. They show keen interest in the customs and traditions of others. Bushey Heath pupils are confident learners, although the school is not consistently capitalising on this potential, and there are not enough opportunities for them to plan and initiate their own activities, both in and out of lessons. Pupils of all ages understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and can explain the benefits of exercise and good diet. They are well informed on topics such as road safety, drug and alcohol abuse and follow safe practices when working with equipment in school. Opportunities for fund raising at summer fairs and charity events contribute further to pupils' personal qualities that will eventually help children gain knowledge about working roles in future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school's evaluation is that teaching and learning are good but inspectors judge them as satisfactory overall. While there is some teaching that is good for pupils of all ages, it is not consistently so across the school. The good lessons are clear in purpose, use a range of learning styles and motivate pupils to do well. Teachers in these lessons

have clear expectations and encourage pupils to succeed. They use resources and questions well to capture pupils' interest, such as when Year 6 pupils used the Internet for information on the Jarrow Marches. Teachers know their subjects well and teach confidently. Pupils work productively as a result. The satisfactory lessons fell short of being good for a range of reasons, including lack of challenge for some pupils; too long spent on a particular activity, such as whole class questioning; and lack of clarity of purpose in planning the lesson. For example, in some mathematics lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2, teachers' planning is guided well by the National Numeracy Strategy but this is not consistent. Consequently these lessons are rather more sharply focussed on what is to be learned than those in some later years. There are times when pupils could be given greater responsibility for their own learning. Although the school regularly assesses pupils' progress, teachers' marking of work as part of their day-to-day assessment could be developed further so that pupils are clearer on what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school judges it to be good overall but has not taken sufficient account of relative weaknesses in mathematics and science. Pupils enjoy the broad and interesting curriculum. It is suitably planned to meet the needs of most pupils. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with learning disabilities and disadvantages. The school does not currently meet the requirement to provide swimming. Appropriate attention has been given to building links between subjects; for example, pupils learn about healthy living through science and physical education. Most lessons promote the application of skills learnt in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. However, problem solving and investigations in mathematics and science are less well focussed and are not given enough emphasis. There is a good range of sports and musical activities and experiences which pupils enjoy and parents value. Pupils respond well to events such as Science Week and Art Week, and produce work of good quality.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's evaluation of good care guidance and support is well supported by inspection judgements. The school takes good care of all its pupils through very clear health, safety, and welfare procedures. Child protection arrangements are good and widely understood. Risk assessments are effective and conscientiously observed. Pupils with special educational needs are guided well. Assessment information is regularly updated to plan an appropriate level of support for all pupils, including the few learning English as an additional language. The extra support for pupils comes from skilled support assistants and the school also draws on other sources of help and expertise. The school's code of behaviour ensures that pupils feel secure and free from any form of racism or bullying. There is a clear culture of mutual respect and pupils receive good personal support and guidance. The regular 'Top Buddy' sessions effectively enhance

the care provision further, as pupils of all ages are supported in their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils express confidence in their teachers and teaching assistants, knowing that any problem will be dealt with fairly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The inspection team judges that leadership and management are satisfactory while the school judges them as good. The school has been through a period of some turbulence, which has adversely affected overall leadership and management. For example, recent changes of staff have slowed the drive to raise pupils' achievement in subjects such as mathematics and science. Consequently, the school's rate of progress since the last inspection has slowed, although with the current staff team there is now a secure platform for further improvement. The headteacher and deputy-head provide the school with a very caring atmosphere. There is shared commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils and to ensuring equality of opportunity. The school's view of its performance is more generous in parts than evidence indicates. Assessment data is evaluated well to identify where action is needed to eliminate potential underachievement. However, systems for monitoring the work of teaching staff do not focus rigorously enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and their achievement. This is leading to inconsistencies in practice and unevenness in learning across the school. Similarly, planning for the school's improvement is not sufficiently focused on how the proposed actions will improve pupils' achievement. Despite many recent changes in personnel, governors are well informed, monitor the work of the school closely and offer a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher. They are involved in establishing the school's strategic direction and annual improvement planning. The school's finances are targeted carefully to meet its identified educational objectives and to provide value for money. New technology and other resources are at a satisfactory level and the school is adequately staffed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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 welcoming us to your school. Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you about what we learned. Thank you, especially to the children who spent time talking and sharing their views and ideas with us. We know that most of you really enjoy coming to school and value what it has to offer you. What we liked about your school: - Your school is friendly and welcoming - You behave well and enjoy very positive relationships with each other - We think you are doing well in English - We enjoyed your Choir and Orchestra sessions at lunch times, and were very pleased to see so many of you performing well in music - You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and you try to work hard - Your headteacher is determined to ensure that you all make good progress and no one is behind in his or her learning. What we have asked your school to do to make it even better - Involve you in more problem solving activities and investigations in mathematics and science so that you are really challenged - Provide you with more guidance about how to improve when your work is assessed - Check on the lessons more closely to help make the teaching even better Class teachers, and all of the other people who help run your school, want to make sure that you get the very best education. We agree with the targets the school has set itself to make your learning even more enjoyable, and we are confident that you will help the school to meet them. With every good wish for the future.