



Bushloe High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120309
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280791
Inspection dates 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Brooker HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Station Road
School category	Foundation		Wigston
Age range of pupils	10 to 14		Leicestershire LE18 2DT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2881692
Number on roll	764	Fax number	0116 2880856
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Andrea Penney
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Webster

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average for a middle school, although demographic changes have reduced the number of pupils since the last inspection. Pupils come from 20 different primary schools including a high proportion from outside the school catchment area. They are from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. There are more boys than girls. Most pupils are of White British heritage; almost one fifth are from Indian and other backgrounds, a proportion that is increasing. A higher than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language; six are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average although the number with a statement of special educational need is broadly average and is increasing year on year. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. A new school, currently being constructed on the site, is due to open in August 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bushloe High School has many of the characteristic features of an outstanding school. Nonetheless, inspectors agree that its effectiveness is good. Despite the actions the school has taken, it has yet to solve the intractable problem of low achievement in mathematics and science in Year 6.

The school's 10 to 14 age range presents both challenges and opportunities. The pupils have just over two terms after joining the school in Year 6 before sitting their end-of-Key Stage 2 tests. The school recognises that results in these national tests have not been high enough in recent years, particularly in mathematics and science. By contrast, the pupils make outstanding progress in Years 7 to 9 and leave the school with standards of attainment that are significantly above average. This means that pupils make good progress overall and that achievement is good. High achievement is evident across the curriculum.

The school has a strongly inclusive ethos that is long-established. It provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils. The curriculum too is outstanding because pupils have such a rich and varied provision, particularly in Year 6. The quality of teaching is good and several teachers are inspirational. The pupils' personal development is outstanding: they attend well, achieve highly and develop as mature and considerate young adults. The school's good reputation is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive views of parents and is well deserved.

Leadership and management are outstanding, primarily because of the excellent leadership of the headteacher and the school's senior managers. The school has rigorously addressed the issues raised at the last inspection. The strong staff and outstanding leadership give the school tremendous capacity for further improvement as it moves into its new accommodation. Given its outcomes and levels of funding, the school provides outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rates of progress that pupils make in Year 6 in order to raise their standards of attainment in mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils' results in national tests for 7-year-olds before they join the school are broadly average. However, the school's assessment of their standards on entry highlights significant gaps in their learning which teachers have just over two terms to rectify before the Key Stage 2 tests. Standards of attainment in English have improved and are broadly in line with national figures. However, despite achieving its own targets based on pupil assessments, results in these national tests have not been high enough in recent years. Standards of attainment in mathematics and science have been below average and have declined over the last two years. Although in Year 6 the

pupils make significant gains in English, lessons in mathematics and science do not present pupils with consistently high levels of challenge. A few pupils say that their work is too easy.

This picture is reversed in Years 7 to 9. The pupils make outstanding progress in Key Stage 3 and leave the school with standards of attainment that are significantly above the national average. Standards have risen steadily in English, mathematics and science in the last three years, exceeding the school's challenging targets. This indicates that all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make better than expected progress as they move through the school, and that achievement is good overall. This outstanding progress and high attainment extend across the curriculum so that the standard of pupils' work in many subjects is above age-related expectations in Years 7 to 9.

The school makes excellent use of assessment data to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in different subjects. Very good use is made of assessment information to target support for specific groups of pupils, such as those who speak English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a school where every child really matters. The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils are very well behaved, courteous and get on well with each other. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and have developed a deep understanding of different cultures, often leading initiatives themselves. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good and often outstanding. The impressive displays of pupils' work are treated with respect, despite being in narrow and cramped corridors. They bear witness to the many exciting and stimulating activities the school provides, including residential trips, music, drama and the many sporting successes. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. Levels of attendance are well above average.

Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The majority participate in the outstanding range of sport and leisure activities on offer, and many take advantage of the extensive range of healthy lunchtime meals.

Pupils readily take responsibility within the school and make significant contributions to the local community, for example by fundraising for charity and working with a local special school. An effective and well organised school council provides opportunities for pupils to contribute to the development of the school, for example by shaping the school's anti-bullying programme. Older pupils act as mentors, a role that is appreciated by the younger pupils. The pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and develop good basic skills for later life, particularly in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). The programme of career and work related activities, which include working with local business representatives and work-shadowing, also makes a significant contribution.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. Pupils make good and often outstanding progress in lessons. Indeed there is a much higher than usual proportion of outstanding teaching across a wide range of subjects. Outstanding and good teaching is characterised by high expectations of pupils who are challenged to think hard, assess how well they are doing and extend their understanding of the topics studied. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn in each lesson and share these objectives precisely. Almost all plan carefully to break up the time, sustain interest and make learning enjoyable. For example, in an outstanding drama lesson, pupils continually assessed their progress in order to refine their work and improve their performance. Most teaching is underpinned by good knowledge of individual pupils' progress. Feedback to pupils is sometimes exceptionally good, particularly when clear goals are set. There is, however, some sketchy marking of work in books. In the small proportion of lessons where teaching and learning are less than good, tasks are not so engaging and teachers are not so careful to make sure that all are involved. In the weaker lessons, the pupils were not suitably challenged and became bored and, occasionally, uncooperative.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it has so many excellent features. It is broad and balanced and well matched to the needs and aspirations of the vast majority of learners. Provision in the arts subjects, performing arts and physical education is particularly strong. The Year 6 curriculum is unusually varied and benefits from a wide range of specialist teaching and resources. An excellent variety of activities enriches the curriculum. Pupils are offered a wide range of experiences, such as residentials, trips and visits, as well as a wide range of out-of-school clubs and activities. There is a very high take up of extra-curricular activities.

Links with other high schools and with the upper school are good. Those with its main primary schools are developing well. The school takes suitable steps to adapt its curriculum, particularly in response to the changing entry profile of pupils over time.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for learners, including those pupils with learning and behavioural needs, are outstanding. Learning support assistants are managed and deployed very well. Some pupils also benefit from specific sessions on improving their behaviour. Relationships with teachers are very good. Pupils and parents appreciate the easy access they have to teachers and the efforts made by teachers to help them with their studies and to deal with any personal difficulties. The pupils feel safe and

there are robust procedures to safeguard them and to identify and support vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs.

The school's comprehensive programme of personal, social, health, economic and citizenship education ensures that pupils are given guidance on a wide range of issues, including family life and the world of work. The school makes good use of assessment data to set challenging targets for subjects and individual pupils. Academic guidance is good. Pupils' progress is monitored closely in order to support those likely to underachieve. Careers guidance is planned and delivered well and pupils have access to staff and resources in planning their future subjects and careers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. This is primarily because the leadership of the headteacher and senior management team is excellent. Although managers at all levels are not equally effective, the school has good procedures to hold middle managers to account and robust systems to review performance and plan future improvement. The headteacher provides a relentless drive in the pursuit of excellence in standards of attainment and in the quality of care. She has a clear vision of how she wants the school to develop. Development planning is rigorous and systematic and soundly based on accurate self-evaluation and the thorough analysis of data.

The headteacher is well supported by an outstanding leadership team. Subject leadership is good overall, although all heads of department are not equally effective at evaluating or leading developments. The school has developed very good systems for checking and improving its work and has a clear and accurate overview of its strengths and areas for development. Subject reviews are systematic and thorough. There is a well-developed programme of staff development and training. Staff at all levels are engaged in the process of school self-evaluation and improvement. This close involvement in shaping policies and guiding developments creates a strong sense of collective ownership and an energy to improve. The staff as a whole demonstrate tremendous capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has developed strong and productive partnerships. The links with a local special school make an excellent contribution to the school's strongly inclusive ethos and the pupils' personal development. The school has recognised the need to work closely with its main primary schools in order to raise standards in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, closer links have helped raise standards in English, particularly in writing, but not yet in mathematics or science.

The strong governing body is well organised and well informed. There are very good systems to ensure that governors have good first-hand information and are able to hold the school to account.

The development of the new building has been very well managed. Despite the difficulties of the old accommodation, the school has been well maintained and the distractions of the new development have not affected its smooth day-to-day running.

The school consults parents and pupils, and responds to their views and opinions, which are overwhelmingly positive.

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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	1	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	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	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	1	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	Yes
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 the contribution that you made to our recent inspection. Your 'ambassadors' made us feel welcome from the moment that we arrived and, after two days, we were left with an impression of a very friendly and successful school. Your opinions were important in confirming what staff, parents and governors told us. We were particularly impressed with:

how well you behave and your positive attitudes

how you take a pride in your appearance, your achievements and your school

how well you participate in lessons and in the wide range of out-of-school activities

the way that you take on responsibilities within the school.

Bushloe High School has many good and outstanding features. One of the most obvious strengths is that it is a very caring place for you to work and develop as young adults. You have a particularly wide and varied curriculum and you are very well taught. Some of your teachers are brilliant! The school is extremely well led by the headteacher and senior managers.

Most of you work hard and make good progress in lessons. However, there is always room for improvement. The main challenge is posed by the fact that you change schools at the age of ten. This is unusual and it means that your learning is disrupted at an awkward time. Many of you do not do as well as you should in the Key Stage 2 tests. We have asked the school to work on:

ensuring that you make better progress in Year 6 in mathematics and science; teachers need to check that your work is never too easy and that there are no gaps in your knowledge.

We are confident that you will continue to do well and wish you every success in future as you move into your new school.