

Buglawton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111033
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288833
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Frank Carruthers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Walker
Headteacher	Mrs S Aston
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001
School address	Buxton Old Road Congleton Cheshire CW12 2EL
Telephone number	01260 272208
Fax number	01260 290462

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school serves a residential area of Congleton and almost all pupils are of White British origin and very few are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. More pupils than usual join or leave the school throughout the year. The school has gained the Basic Skills Award, the Artsmark, Activemark, Inclusion Quality Mark, the Foundation Stage Kitemark, the Healthy Schools Award and Investors in People Award. The current headteacher is leaving at the end of term to take up the headship of another school and a new headteacher has been appointed and is starting in September.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The high quality of its provision and of its leadership and management leads to the outstanding outcomes in the pupils' excellent academic achievement and personal development. Pupils do exceptionally well in English, mathematics and science, and standards are high. Challenging targets are regularly exceeded. Almost all pupils in Year 6 reach the level expected in tests at this age and over half reach the higher Level 5. The school is frequently in the top 5% of schools nationally for the value it adds to the pupils' learning in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is very impressive because they are given clear guidance on how they can improve and work is challenging. Those with additional needs also make excellent progress because they are given all the support they need and the standards they achieve often match their peers' in tests in Year 6.

Pupils enjoy school very much, behave very well and develop an excellent awareness of personal safety and how to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle. They acquire important skills of cooperative behaviour and independence in learning which help them when they begin secondary education. Provision for their care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school has achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark and has very strong links with outside agencies that are of exceptional benefit to the personal development of all pupils, especially the most vulnerable. Staff and pupils have excellent relationships and these are the foundation for the pupils' mature, positive attitudes. The school has comprehensive procedures to keep track of how pupils achieve and uses the information extremely well to identify gaps in their learning and takes effective action to remedy them.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is outstanding. Strengths of the teaching in all classes include the challenging and interesting work and excellent relationships between pupils and staff. The curriculum has a richness that promotes the pupils' enjoyment of school exceptionally well. There are exciting themed weeks in which topics are explored with visitors to school and a wide range of events and trips. The standard of art work displayed in school, for example that linked to the theme of One World, is very impressive. It makes for a lively learning environment and promotes the pupils' self-esteem exceptionally well. The school operates an extensive programme of activities outside lessons and there are challenging residential trips in England and abroad. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are outstanding and the children's learning is built on very well in Year 1. Major strengths of the Reception class are the expertise of staff and the excellent links created with parents and the adjacent pre-school playgroup, which give the children a great start to school life.

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and is extremely well supported by the deputy headteacher. Together, they have excellent expertise to plan school improvement and monitor the school's performance. Their self-evaluation of the school is accurate, though they have been a little modest at times because they are rarely satisfied with the school's achievements and are always striving to improve. The school takes a lead part in a network with other schools and this is particularly effective in sharing best practice. Governors take a full part in strategic planning, have an excellent awareness of how the school is performing and are very well led by the chair and vice chairperson. Highly effective steps have been taken since the last inspection to improve standards and provision, and this indicates an excellent capacity to maintain and improve quality. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is average and because of the excellent outcomes, the school provides outstanding value for money. Parents are extremely active in their support for their children's learning and for the school as a whole. Their

contribution is highly valued by the school. Typical comments from parents include: 'The staff are always looking for new ways to make learning fun,' and 'My son left this school with many unique tools which have provided him with a strong foundation for high school.'

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant aspects for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

On entry to the Reception class some children's skills are broadly typical and others are below what is expected for children of that age. In the Reception class pupils' achievement is excellent. They make very good progress and achieve the goals for their learning because of excellent teaching. Standards are usually high in Years 2 and 6, though they occasionally vary according to the nature of the year groups. This is the case in the current Years 2 and 5, which have an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school supports these pupils exceptionally well. Provisional results of the Year 6 2007 tests in English, mathematics and science show that standards are as high as those found last year and in some respects have improved. This excellent achievement is the result of outstanding teaching, especially, but not exclusively, in Year 6. It is supported by pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, fostered by the staff's high expectations for their behaviour and learning, and the strong support of parents. The school identified a relative weakness in standards of mathematics and took effective steps to improve this by teaching discrete year groups in Key Stage 2 and using specialist teaching in Year 6. More pupils reached the expected level in the test this year than previously.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic and behave very well. There have been very few exclusions and levels of attendance are above average. Pupils have little concern about bullying, which they report is very rare, and any incidents of misbehaviour are handled properly by staff. Pupils in Year 5 train to become play leaders, who are very helpful in making younger pupils feel safe and welcomed. Pupils enjoy school and this is evident in the high take up of activities outside lessons and their enthusiasm for trips and residential visits. School councillors have done much to help improve playground facilities and they successfully organised an anti-bullying week. Road safety and eco-school officers are active in promoting awareness of these important issues. Pupils have a very good understanding of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves, for instance, by raising money for national and local causes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Major strengths of the teaching are the high expectations of staff that the pupils should always produce their best work. Consequently, workbooks and folders are very well presented. Lessons are very well planned and pupils listen exceptionally well. Displays of pupils' work are stimulating and attractive, thus raising the pupils' self-esteem and pride. Teachers have made rapid strides

in their confident handling of new technology, such as interactive whiteboards, to motivate and interest pupils. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to the achievement of pupils through teaching additional programmes of work very effectively; for example, in Year 5 where there are several pupils with additional needs. Marking is especially thorough, and verbal and written feedback helps the pupils to know what they must do to improve. A simplified code for the marking of work clearly indicates the teachers' views of the pupils' effort and the quality of their work. As a result, their learning is highly effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is exceptional because staff regularly take a whole-school approach to themes and plan cross-curricular topics that promote the pupils' enjoyment of learning very well. Staff place a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and links between subjects are very effective in promoting these skills. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and aspects are being continued into Year 1 to very good effect. Provision for the most able and talented pupils is very good and makes effective use of links with other schools, specialists and coaches. The school has gained several awards, which indicates its commitment to promoting pupils' cultural awareness and a healthy and fit lifestyle. Personal, social and health education features highly in the curriculum and is enhanced by excellent links with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. There is an outstanding range of activities outside lessons and visits for pupils to enjoy. Pupils are proud of their success in local sports. Provision for a modern foreign language, French, is well established and enhanced by residential visits to France and Holland.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school promotes the well-being of pupils exceptionally well. All aspects of health, safety, child protection and risk assessment, and arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff are in place. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good, and links with outside agencies are used very effectively to help more vulnerable pupils to reach their potential. Arrangements for the transition of children into the Reception class and on to Year 1, as well as links with the associated high school and support for pupils who start at the school late, are very effective. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire have very positive views of the school. The school canvasses their views and has taken action on any concerns they might have. For example, the school improved communication with parents and reassured the few who expressed concern about school meals by inviting them to come in and sample a typical menu. Procedures to track the progress of pupils are used very effectively to identify good achievement and gaps in learning. Targets are clearly understood by pupils, shared with parents and have a positive impact on how pupils achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The senior leadership team of headteacher and deputy headteacher has had a highly significant influence on improvements to the school since the time of the last inspection, when pupils' progress was judged to be satisfactory and standards were average or below. They have been instrumental as role models to others in promoting high expectations for pupils' learning and achievement. Their success is clearly evident in higher standards and improved provision.

Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has been fully effective in identifying areas for improvement. These became key priorities in the very clear school development plans and effective action taken. Governors are integral to the planning process by their membership of staff/governor teams who have specific areas of school provision to focus on. This is excellent practice and means governors and staff have a thorough overview of the school's performance and effectiveness.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Buglawton Primary School, Congleton, CW12 2EL

I would like to thank you very much for your help when I inspected your school. I enjoyed my visit very much indeed. Now I would like to share with you my thoughts about your school.

Yours is an outstanding school. Here are just some of the excellent features of your school.

- The staff take excellent care of you all and teach you exceptionally well.
- Your headteacher has high expectations for your school and everyone in it responds to the challenge.
- It is clear that you enjoy school very much and are all becoming mature students who want to do well.
- The children in the Reception class get off to an excellent start in school.
- You are doing exceptionally well in English, mathematics and science.
- The school makes your learning very exciting and interesting, for instance, in planning trips abroad and organising visitors and events in the themed weeks and at other times.
- The staff provide you with excellent opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and to enjoy activities at playtimes, lunchtimes and after school.

Congratulations to everyone! Please carry on working hard and enjoying school.