



Bushey and Oxhey Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117157
Local Authority HERTFORDSHIRE
Inspection number 290740
Inspection dates 13–14 December 2006
Reporting inspector Mary Summers

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Aldenham Road
School category	Community		Bushey, Bushey
Age range of pupils	4–7		Watford, Hertfordshire
			WD2 2NB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01923 229731
Number on roll (school)	109	Fax number	01923 229731
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr S Hall
		Headteacher	Mrs S McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2001		

Age group 4–7	Inspection dates 13–14 December 2006	Inspection number 290740
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small infant school caters for pupils from the local community and also from further afield. The school roll has fallen steadily since the last inspection but looks likely to rise in the next year. Three quarters of the pupils come from White British families and the remainder represent a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is much lower than in most schools. Attainment on entry to the school is above that expected for their age. There has been a change of headteacher and deputy headteacher since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This school provides a good education for its pupils. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. Adults know each child very well and provide excellent levels of support and encouragement both personally and academically. 'The school is a warm, welcoming, stable, supportive environment,' noted one parent. As a result, pupils feel safe, confident and ready to approach new learning. They make a positive start to their education in the Reception class, settling in quickly and responding well to new routines and adults' high expectations. They are nurtured well during the early days, and positive relationships are built with parents. This good rate of progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and pupils leave at the end of Year 2, having reached standards in literacy and numeracy which are significantly and consistently above national expectations. Their achievement is good.

The school is also successful in enabling pupils to reach very high standards in their personal development. Pupils work together very effectively, respecting one another's opinions and different cultures and backgrounds. One parent remarked, 'I have been amazed at the children's work ethic; how well they help each other and how successfully they work independently.' These attributes stand them in good stead to become responsible citizens of the future. Pupils enjoy the diverse curriculum that the school offers, including lessons and the good range of extracurricular activities. Pupils play an active role within the school community as school councillors and class monitors. They are developing a very good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills but their opportunities to develop the same high levels in information and communication technology (ICT), while satisfactory, are not as good.

Good quality teaching contributes considerably to pupils' positive achievement. Teachers are skilled at presenting their lessons in an interesting and stimulating manner, using a good range of resources to make learning enjoyable for the pupils. They plan lessons carefully, providing challenging work for pupils of different capabilities.

The school is well led and managed and this results in good teamwork and a shared commitment to improve. It evaluates its own performance well and provides good value for money. The headteacher has established extremely positive relationships with parents who show strong support for the school and their children's education. 'My son looks forward to going to school every day,' noted one, 'I am thrilled with his progress!'

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision and achievement in ICT to the same high level as in literacy and numeracy.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school at levels which are above those expected for their age. They settle quickly into Reception, make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, most reach the goals expected for their age in all areas of learning. They make particularly good gains in their personal and social development, transferring to Year 1 as keen, independent learners with very high levels of motivation.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards in the national tests in Year 2 have been significantly higher than average for the past six years. The proportion of pupils exceeding expectations for their age fluctuates from year to year and the school has rightly identified the need to maintain these numbers at a high level. Pupils with learning difficulties, English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds receive effective support and all make good progress. They are well prepared to move on to the next stage in their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils are proud of their successes. They enjoy their lessons, responding eagerly to teachers' questions, listening carefully to one another's ideas and working extremely well together to complete tasks. These skills help them to prepare for the next stage in their education as well as life beyond school. They are extremely well behaved. They value one another's different cultural backgrounds highly, one girl saying proudly that her Indian friend had two names, and spoke two languages. 'Isn't she clever?' she remarked.

Pupils readily accept responsibility and take their roles seriously, keen to make a difference within the school community. They appreciate the school council, describing how they want to improve arrangements for wet playtime and provide books at lunchtime for pupils who prefer quieter activities. In developing very good healthy lifestyles, most choose healthy options at lunchtime and are keen to take part in physical education lessons and out-of-school sports activities. Most pupils attend regularly and punctually.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know their pupils well and this helps them quickly identify their strengths and weaknesses and prepare lessons which provide a good degree of challenge for pupils at different levels. Teaching assistants perform a valuable role in this, working well with small groups to help pupils who need extra

support. Pupils learn effectively because the activities provided for them are stimulating and practical. They offer plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss and share ideas as well as develop very good levels of independence. Even during the Christmas festivities, Year 2 pupils were keenly involved in writing a list of instructions about how to play their Santa game. They tested these out on one another to see if they made sense and to assess how well they had completed the task.

Teachers use a good range of resources including computer technology to make lessons interesting and easier for the pupils to understand. This also enables them to show pupils good models of handwriting and spelling which help them in their future work. Only in a few instances do lessons lack pace. This results in pupils becoming restless and losing their concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum, including that in the Foundation Stage, is good. It enables pupils to achieve well and develop their capabilities through stimulating, relevant learning experiences. There is appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy but not at the expense of other subjects, all of which receive appropriate coverage. The school is correctly developing the creative side of the curriculum and evidence of this is apparent in attractive displays of pupils' work in design and technology, and art and design. There is also a good variety of extracurricular clubs for children to develop confidence and skill in, for example sport and music. Although pupils receive satisfactory teaching and coverage of ICT, provision is not as strong as in literacy and numeracy.

The school offers a well-organised personal, social and health education programme which teaches pupils how to make sensible choices, for example, and how to look after the environment. The school's mission of 'educating today's child for tomorrow' is fulfilled well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The environment is extremely warm and welcoming for pupils. They feel safe, confident in the knowledge that problems are dealt with quickly. Adults know every pupil well and this means that they feel valued and confident to attempt new learning. Rigorous checks are carried out to ensure pupils remain safe. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle by monitoring pupils' choices at lunchtime carefully and providing a good range of physical activities, within and outside lesson time. Awards for good work and effort are designed to build pupils' confidence and prepare them well for the future.

Pupils are well supported in class. They receive good advice about what they need to do to improve. The school has well-established systems to check pupils' progress and these highlight any pockets of underachievement. Very effective links with outside specialists, for example, speech and language therapists, help pupils to surmount barriers to their learning so they can learn effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties

and those with English as an additional language are carefully supported in class and small groups; teachers plan work which helps them move on at a good pace.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher maintains a strong focus on school improvement and has very good levels of support from staff and parents. She and her deputy set very clear direction for the school's work. Good teamwork ensures a consistent approach and high expectations. Governors support the school well and carry out their duties well. Suitable systems have been developed to check the effectiveness of the teaching and offer appropriate professional support if necessary. The positive relationships between staff enable these checks to be carried out in a supportive and non-judgemental way, so that everyone feels valued and part of the team. These systems mean that the school gains an accurate view of its performance and is able to identify where it needs to improve.

School improvement planning is satisfactory but is not always focused sharply enough on how actions will improve pupils' learning, with measurable indicators to evaluate success. However, the school's past record, its good commitment and teamwork stand it in good stead to continue to improve in the future.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Leadership and management

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

15 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Bushey and Oxhey Infant School, Aldenham Road, Bushey, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD23 2QH

Thank you for your warm welcome and for telling me all about your school. I very much enjoyed being with you in lessons and chatting with you in the dining hall and in the playground. Everything I saw during my visit convinced me that you go to a good school.

These are the things I think are good.

- You are growing up as confident, extremely well-behaved children who enjoy learning and know how to keep safe and healthy.
- You do well in your work and reach very high standards by the time you leave.
- Teachers and other adults take very good care of you and give you help if you need it.
- You enjoy your lessons and work well together, listening carefully to one another's ideas.
- The people in charge do a good job in running the school.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve one aspect of school life.

- You need to use computers more to help your work in all sorts of subjects.

I know that you will continue to work hard and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Mary Summers

Lead Inspector