

# Buxton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120794
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	291860
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Francis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Garry Goodman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jayne Dingley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Aylsham Road Buxton Norwich Norfolk NR10 5EZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 279357
<b>Fax number</b>	01603 279296

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school to the north of Norwich serving the village and surrounding rural area. Numbers have fallen significantly over the last five years, particularly with the closure of the nearby airbase at Coltishall in 2006. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic families and none are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average. Since the last inspection there have been a number of changes to the leadership of the school.

The school is recognised by Investors in People.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate. While the headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has accurately identified the most important areas for improvement, some aspects of the overall evaluation are too generous. There has not been sufficient structure or rigour to monitoring, particularly of teaching and learning. As a consequence, any areas for improvement identified have not been followed up and quality of learning has not improved quickly enough. Weakness in governance means that the leadership of the school, at all levels, has not been held to account for the inadequate progress pupils make.

Good provision and skilful teaching enable children to get a good start in Reception, to reach standards above those normally seen for this age. However, following several years of high standards by the end of Year 2, results over the last two years have declined steadily and are now only average. At the end of Year 6, test and assessment results are average and have been for many years, indicating that these pupils are not reaching the standards that their capabilities at Year 2 suggest they should. From an above average starting point in Year 1, pupils in both key stages make inadequate progress over time. This is the result of teaching being inadequate overall. While there are examples of good teaching for most pupils, much of it lacks inspiration, pace and challenge. Pupils with learning difficulties are a notable exception to this trend. Enjoying good provision and support, they achieve well and reach standards well above average compared to their peers nationally.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, supported by the satisfactory provision for care, guidance and support. The school has developed a more consistent approach to assessment and recording. This is now providing better information, allowing pupils' progress to be tracked more accurately. However, this information is not being used well enough to identify trends in progress over time. Neither do pupils have sufficient understanding of what their own targets mean and what they need to do to improve. Most pupils behave sensibly and show respect for others. However, there is a small minority who find it difficult to conform to the standards expected. Pupils contribute to the school and wider community, for example, through the school council, which they take very seriously and value the responsibility they are given and through the environmental (ECO) group. Most pupils enjoy school. They like the way the curriculum is now taught through topics and feel it is more interesting and that they learn more, especially when it is linked to real-life problems and challenges. The good business enterprise curriculum helps to prepare pupils' for their future economic well-being. Pupils have a secure understanding of the benefits of exercise and healthy lifestyles but do not always support this in their everyday habits. Given the low levels of achievement and lack of progress since the last inspection, the school does not give satisfactory value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the strategic leadership and management at all levels so that the responsibilities and accountability of all involved are clearly defined and there are systems to evaluate the impact of these.
- Use the available data more effectively to identify what is needed to improve the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Bring greater rigour into monitoring of teaching and learning to address identified weaknesses.
- Give pupils a greater understanding of their targets and involve them consistently in recording and checking their own progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

In 2006, the majority of pupils at both Year 2 and Year 6 failed to achieve to their potential and made inadequate progress. The school failed to meet its targets in English and mathematics, and significantly so for the higher Level 5. Current standards reflect a similar pattern, except for pupils with learning difficulties who make good progress, attaining levels well above those seen nationally for this group. This is the result of good provision and support by teaching assistants.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well and work hard, but there are some, mainly boys, whose behaviour and attitudes fall short of this standard. This is a matter that concerns a number of pupils and parents. Pupils understand what they need to do to stay safe and keep healthy, but do not consistently apply this knowledge in practice, for example, by bringing snacks to school that have a high fat or salt content. They are keen to participate in the wide range of physical activities on offer. Attendance is good. Pupils find many more lessons 'fun' because with the new curriculum they are more interesting and relevant than they used to be, and they 'learn more'. They are keen to take responsibility for their own community through the school council and ECO group, and do so to good effect. Overall, by the time they leave the school, most pupils are thoughtful and well motivated young people who, given their academic capabilities, could be better prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 4

Teaching is not stretching all pupils sufficiently. While challenging targets are set for pupils to achieve, they do not consistently reach these and the assessment of their progress towards them lacks the rigour needed to spur pupils on to higher achievement. Marking, likewise is too variable. While regular and supportive, it is not leading to improvement. Teachers clearly identify in their planning what they want their pupils to learn and are making good use of the technology available, such as the interactive white boards. Where good teaching is seen, lessons are lively and learning is well planned to meet the individual needs of the pupils. As a result they are responsive, keen to learn and work at a good pace. However, the pace, drive and tasks which

would fire the pupils' imagination is often lacking. In some instances the quality of learning slips further because pupils either spend too long listening to the teacher, the work is undemanding or too much time is allowed for the tasks set. This results in slow progress. Having identified many of these elements, the school's leadership has not brought sufficient rigour to following up any recommendations made for improvement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is not consistently matched to the full range of learners' capabilities and needs. The Reception children enjoy an imaginative and stimulating curriculum that excites their attention and interest, enabling them to achieve well. Similarly, pupils with additional learning needs are well catered for. The school's move towards a more creative curriculum placing greater emphasis on pupils as active learners is only partially successful. Where it works well, pupils are increasingly enabled to develop and apply their knowledge and skills in a wider variety of cross-curricular contexts, for example in Year 6 in mathematics. Where it is less successful, teachers make too little time available for pupils, especially the more able, to develop their understanding through practical tasks. Pupils are not sufficiently engaged in their own learning, especially in Key Stage 1. The wide range of after-school activities is much enjoyed and valued by pupils, as are the topic weeks and the business enterprise work provided for them. In contrast, pupils and parents alike are disappointed by the reduction in educational visits in recent times. The provision to promote pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school meets all the necessary requirements for the care and safeguarding of pupils. The pastoral care provided is satisfactory and has some strengths. The school works well with other agencies to provide additional guidance and support. Staff know the children well and are genuinely committed to them. Pupils value this, but at the same time do not always feel that their concerns are adequately listened to by all staff. The academic guidance for pupils is inconsistent. Tracking records, while detailed, are not used sufficiently robustly to support detailed and precise targets for all pupils. Those for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and for Reception children, provide an exception to this. Relations with parents are mixed and while a number of parents recognise that improvements are being made, a small minority are less convinced of this. The changes taking place and the headteachers vision for the future are not being communicated as effectively as they might.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

Since the last inspection standards have fallen without sufficient remedial action being taken. The school's leadership has failed to establish the reasons for the inadequate achievement in Key Stage 2, or the fall in standards at Year 2 and put in place measures to address this. The headteacher has accurately identified the most important issues for improvement. However, the monitoring of many aspects of the school's work by managers at all levels is not regular enough and neither has it the necessary rigour that would improve the overall quality and increase the pace of change. There is not a sufficiently strong focus on identifying the strengths and weaknesses in learning or teaching so the best practice in the school can be shared and

built on and weaknesses addressed. Governance is inadequate. Governors are committed but ineffective in addressing the decline. The governing body does not receive all the information it needs to effectively evaluate the work of the school. However, neither does it have its own systems for gathering information about the schools' performance. The governing body lacks secure strategies for evaluating either the school's work or its own effectiveness.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

29 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buxton Primary School, Buxton, Norwich, NR10 5EZ

You may remember that Mr Williams and I visited your school recently. We would like to thank you for making us welcome. We were pleased that those of you we talked with wanted to share their work and ideas. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school and how it can be better.

Your teachers and other adults in school know you well and want to do their best for you. We liked the way your teachers used the interactive white boards to make your lessons more interesting. Most of you behave well but there are a few children who do not and spoil things for others. Those children really need to think about how their actions affect others in the school.

We think the school council and the ECO group do a good job. You told us you enjoy school, particularly with the new creative curriculum, which is making many of your lessons more interesting. We thought that the range of extra activities you can take part in is good and your business enterprise work is really impressive. We also recognise that you are disappointed that there is little opportunity to go on visits to widen your knowledge of some of the things you are studying.

While most of you do as well as pupils in other schools, we feel many of you can do much better. To help with this we would like the school to do a number of things. We have asked those who lead and manage the school to improve how they measure the school's progress and how well your teachers are helping you to learn. We have also asked them to make better use all of the information they have from your tests so they know what it is you need to do to improve and to share this with you more regularly. Inspectors will call regularly to help the school focus on these issues. You can play your part in making your school better by behaving well, working your hardest all the time and showing what you are really capable of.

It was a pleasure to meet you.

John Francis

Lead inspector