

Bury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110846
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310438
Inspection date	24 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr W Thompson
Headteacher	Mr J Summerell
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Owls End Bury Huntingdon PE26 2NJ
Telephone number	01487813784
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, particularly in writing, teaching, assessment and target setting, how pupils' skills are developed in a cross curricular manner and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, sampling of pupils' work, assessment and target setting information, portfolios of the work of the school and discussions with pupils, key members of staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as detailed in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Bury Primary School is an average sized school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average with the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need being close to the picture nationally. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds none are at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bury is an outstanding school and fully deserves the high reputation with which it is held by parents, pupils and the local community. A parental comment, echoed and supported by many others, sums up the school well, 'Children love coming to school ...and they leave exceptionally well prepared for the future.' This is a highly successful school. The excellent qualities evident in leadership and management and care, the good teaching, the rich curriculum aligned with the tremendous contribution made by the pupils are a winning combination. They help pupils to thrive and reach exceptionally high standards. A corner stone of the school's success is the shared commitment of all staff and governors to never standing still. They are reflective, have no complacency, never rest on their laurels but instead continually setting the bar of expectation higher. At the heart of this mission is the headteacher, who modestly and in an understated manner, drives the school forward and plays a pivotal role in its continued development. His highly effective leadership motivates staff, pupils, parents and governors to aim for continued growth. Issues for improvement are identified and tackled with rigour and professionalism and have a lasting impact. This is seen in the sustained very high level of performance of the school over a considerable time.

Attainment on entry for pupils is broadly average and a little above in aspects of communication and personal development. By the time that pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high and have remained consistently at this level for a number of years. Achievement is often exceptional. Writing standards, lag a little behind but are continually improving because of the school's efforts in implementing new initiatives, to develop pupils' higher order writing skills. This is an example of what the school is particularly good at: a readiness to try new ideas in the search for continuous improvement. Its great attention to detail is also reflected in the very good assessment and academic guidance provided. Robust procedures are in place to assess pupils' performance. The information is used in an excellent manner to set aspirational but achievable targets, to rigorously monitor pupils' progress towards their goals and to guide teaching. This process is helped by marking, particularly in English, that gives pupils very good pointers for improvement and clear explanations as to why a piece of work is as good as it is. Pupils, particularly older ones, have a very good awareness of their individual targets and what they need to do to reach the next level.

The exceptional standards that pupils attain by the age of eleven owe much to the quality of teaching and learning. The very good monitoring procedures that are in place mean that teaching is regularly evaluated through lesson observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. This rigour brings about continuous improvements. Teaching is good with some outstanding practice and it is the cumulative impact of good teaching year on year that results in overall achievement being excellent. Work is challenging and demanding for pupils of all abilities and the incisive questioning that is a feature of many lessons keeps pupils on their toes. Only occasionally are these features not present. Management of pupils, relationships and use of interactive whiteboards are excellent and helps to create a highly effective learning environment where teaching assistants also make a significant contribution. Pupils are encouraged to be creative in their thinking, problem solving and investigative work, as well as thoroughly enjoying themselves and readily rising to the challenges set. Although there are many displays around the school, they do not always reflect or celebrate the high quality of work that pupils produce.

Pupils make a major contribution to making the school what it is. Their love and enjoyment of school is reflected in the high attendance rates. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils have an infectious enthusiasm and a strong desire to do well. Their behaviour is exemplary and they are great ambassadors for the school. Discussions with them are summed up by one pupil who said, 'It's a great school and a great place to be.' The strong emphasis that the school gives to pupils' personal and social as well as their academic development manifests itself in pupils' excellent awareness of what is needed to follow fit, healthy and safe lives. They make a tremendous contribution to the school community and beyond through the school council, eco council, recycling, conservation activities, fund-raising and participation in community events. Pupils are very reflective and caring individuals who constantly look out for one another and have a very strong awareness of how their actions can impact on others. Their knowledge of other faiths and cultures is very good and helped by the links with schools in France and particularly, Nicaragua where recently the school used a computer link to have a shared assembly between the two schools.

Pupils' enjoyment and achievements are also due to the good curriculum and excellent care, guidance and support provided. The curriculum is rich and enables pupils to reach good standards in subjects such as art and design and music and very good standards in information and communication technology (ICT). Enrichment opportunities through residential visits, visitors and after school clubs are good. Very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for gifted and talented pupils contributes significantly to their achievement. The area for development, accurately, identified by the school is to develop pupils' writing, problem solving, numeracy, computer and thinking skills in a more innovative and creative manner across different subjects and through other school and enterprise initiatives. At present this is not a regular enough feature of school life to bring a further dimension to pupils' learning. Alongside the many strengths in academic guidance lies the excellent pastoral support and care where pupils feel safe, valued and respected. The individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated and they feel they are given a genuine voice in the life of the school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are all securely in place and pupils talk readily about how there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns whatsoever and that 'bullying is not a problem at our school.'

This outstanding school is the result of tremendous team work. The headteacher is the first to recognise this and greatly values the high levels of support and shared challenging, evaluating and monitoring of the school's work carried out by the senior leadership team and subject leaders and the good work of the governors. Together they have an outstanding awareness of where the school is at and where they want it to go, particularly in promoting, excellence and enjoyment.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils get off to a good start in their educational lives because of the good teaching that enables them to make good progress and achieve well. By the time that pupils start in Year 1, standards are above national expectations. Adults work well together to provide a range of activities that allow pupils to learn through 'first hand' experiences as well as the direct teaching of key basic skills. Adults have a very good idea of the levels that pupils are working at and use the information to guide and inform their teaching activities. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboard and the outdoor accommodation but displays are not always used to best effect as attractive and effective learning aids. Pupils respond very well to all the activities on offer and their behaviour is often excellent. Provision

is well managed and the very good procedures for home visits and induction enable pupils to settle very quickly into school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to enhance their writing, problem solving and creative thinking skills across different subjects and through other innovative curriculum, school and enterprise initiatives.

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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.

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

25 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Bury CofE Primary School, Owls End, Huntingdon PE26 2NJ

You will probably remember that I visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what I found out. Before I do, I would first like to say thank you for making me feel so welcome and making my visit one that I will remember for a long time. I have told your teachers how you were all so helpful and polite. Through my discussions with you it was great to hear how much you love coming to school and how much fun you find it. It was also good to hear about how safe you feel in school, that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried.

I found so many wonderful and impressive things about Bury School that I have to say it is an outstanding school! Teachers and other staff make teaching and learning challenging and fun and help you to achieve exceptionally well and reach very high standards. The curriculum, the clubs, the visits and visitors are all good. The way in which the school helps you to keep safe and healthy and how it cares and supports you are all excellent. Mr Summerell is an outstanding teacher and together with all the staff and governors, makes the school such a great place to learn. There is another tremendous strength of the school that I have not mentioned yet. That is you, the children. What great ambassadors for the school you are! I was so impressed with your behaviour, your enthusiasm, how you know so much about keeping healthy and the way that you make a difference in school through the school council, ECO committee and many other examples, is just tremendous. Well done!

Even outstanding schools like yours can improve. I have asked your teachers to help you further improve your learning by providing lots of opportunities to test out your writing, number and problem solving skills in different subjects and other exciting activities. Mr Summerell, the staff and governors want the school to continue to be as successful and I know you will play your part by continuing to behave well and work hard. I wish you every success in your future. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead inspector