

# Buckland Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123145
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314513
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Carnaghan

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Phil Duff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Heather Broom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Summerside Road Buckland Faringdon SN7 8RB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01367 870236
<b>Fax number</b>	01367 870437

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<b>Age group</b>	5-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Buckland Church of England Primary School is much smaller than average. It has more girls than boys and far fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and 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: 2

Buckland is a good and improving school with some outstanding features. The key to its success lies in the close-knit team that the headteacher has forged with her colleagues and their shared determination to care for pupils' needs and give them the best possible experience. One parent summed up the positive atmosphere, writing, 'Staff attitude to pupils is excellent, both my daughters thrive in this environment'.

Children enter school with higher than expected skills. By the time they leave, pupils' standards are well above average. Their achievement is good. One significant reason for this is good teaching and learning. Lessons are well-planned and interesting and pupils participate keenly, responding very well to teachers' high expectations. Very good marking of books, and the clear targets set, help pupils make good progress. Occasionally, lessons do not drive forward with enough pace to ensure high achievement. The good curriculum is enlivened by frequent visitors and visits. Pupils appreciate the many after-school activities offered. They are well cared for and trust teachers to look after them and arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are robust. There is good academic guidance at all stages but pupils do not have enough opportunities to assess their own and others' work.

Pupils really like school and their personal development is good. They are well behaved and there is virtually no bullying, which pupils say is dealt with well. They display an outstanding understanding of how to live healthily, taking plenty of exercise both during the school day and before and after school. The nutritious and delicious school meals are very popular and pupils grow vegetables on their class 'allotments' which add local produce to their diet.

Very effective leadership from the headteacher has rallied staff to her side and they ensure good leadership and management. Outstanding partnerships with others mean that this small rural school is far from isolated. Governors know and support the school well. However, continuing efforts to improve the school buildings have not overcome the lack of space mentioned in the previous inspection. Consistently rigorous self-evaluation, led by the headteacher, has enabled the school to draw up clear, relevant plans for the future and its capacity for improvement is good.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that children get a good start to their education. Careful curriculum planning affords good opportunities for children to develop and grow. They achieve well and start Year 1 with skills exceeding national expectations. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and other adults assess and track progress carefully and this ensures that each individual is well supported. Lessons include a good balance between teacher-led and child initiated activities and promote children's developing independence. Children develop good learning habits in their first year and these prove valuable throughout their school careers.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lessons set and meet challenging objectives and, through self-assessment, help pupils to understand fully how well they are progressing.
- Develop the school's accommodation, in particular to provide better opportunities for small group work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children start school with higher than expected skills. When they leave, their standards are well above average. Pupils' achievement, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is good.

Effective teaching, thorough planning and children's positive attitudes all contribute to the good start made in the Foundation Stage. Because groups of children are small, there are variations in their skills when they start at school. However, the individual attention they receive ensures that they achieve well in the Reception class.

The school uses assessment information carefully to promote good progress across the school. For example, the school successfully focused on raising writing standards in Key Stage 1, after assessment indicated weaker progress in this area. By tailoring support and challenge to individual pupils, good standards are maintained and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average, with little variation between subjects. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT), a concern in the previous inspection, are improving and currently above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are strongly supported, particularly by teaching assistants. This ensures that their achievement is as good as, and sometimes better than, their peers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life. They get on very well with one another and adults in the school and behave well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop as responsible young people with a good grasp of right and wrong. The curriculum enables pupils to widen their horizons and develop a good understanding of other cultures.

Pupils show strong concern for their own and others' safety and act responsibly, even when excited by the prospect of participating in a Christmas production. There is very little bullying and pupils are certain that, on the rare occasions where there is discord, staff quickly restore harmony.

The school council provides a lively forum for pupils to express their views. When the headteacher cannot attend, pupils happily run it themselves. Pupils take the initiative in fund-raising and readily take on other responsibilities, like the group of Year 6 girls who run the wake up/shake up exercise session before school starts. Pupils make an outstandingly positive contribution to the community. Their development of skills to help them in the future is good; in particular they learn to work well independently and in groups.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils learn well for a number of reasons. Teachers perceptively question pupils to ensure their understanding. Pupils' work is very well marked. Teachers write friendly comments, offering praise and reward as well as constructive advice, indicating where improvements should be made. Pupils respond well to this. Another strength is pupils' positive approach and good behaviour. They are keen to learn and work well, both independently and in small groups.

Lessons are thoroughly planned. Teachers are very careful to cater for the entire ability range. Teaching assistants are well-qualified and work closely with teachers, so they know what to do in each phase of the lesson, proffering support where it is most required. They contribute to the comprehensive data accumulated on each pupil. This information is used to analyse trends in performance and, for example, identify pupils who may need support to boost progress.

In some lessons, the pace can slip and the learning objectives are not completely met. Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to assess their own work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Careful planning and regular reviews ensure that the curriculum both meets all requirements and offers interesting opportunities. Pupils enjoy the varied experiences and appreciate the interesting range of visits and visitors. These have a positive impact on their achievement. The school's close links with nearby primary and secondary schools widen the opportunities available. ICT provision has improved and this is starting to raise standards. Thoughtful planning ensures that areas such as multi-cultural understanding are promoted in numerous subjects. Pupils enjoy being taught French. Group work for pupils withdrawn from classrooms is difficult because there are no suitable small teaching spaces.

For such a small school, there are numerous ways for pupils to take part in after school activities in sport, the arts and other areas. They think this is a strength of the school and participate in large numbers.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The high level of commitment of staff to the care of pupils promotes their health and safety very well. In this small school, pupils are very well known to staff and they are all aware that they can turn to adults with confidence should they need to. Careful assessment ensures very thorough arrangements to support all pupils, in particular those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has robust arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and meets all statutory requirements.

Information from tests and assessments is used to set targets for pupils in English, mathematics and science. These are clearly expressed, to the point and regularly referred to in lessons. As they are achieved, they are replaced by the next target and so promote learning very well. The school has plans to extend their use to other subjects.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher works closely with staff to ensure that their shared vision is implemented. Her monitoring of teaching and other areas is accurate and perceptive, and widely welcomed by staff. It accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement and has ensured greater consistency in teaching, better marking and effective use of assessment.

Staff feel ownership of the school and its development plan because they are regularly consulted. The plan draws on monitoring information to identify priorities and implement measures to

ensure that objectives are met. However, not all plans are fully costed. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection and provides good value for money.

Governors understand the school well. Through close links with subject co-ordinators and regular visits, they provide support and challenge to ensure that improvements continue. Governors have striven to improve accommodation but the building is inconvenient, as it was during the previous inspection. There is too little storage and office space and too few small rooms.

The school has outstandingly effective links with other local educational institutions, including the on-site pre-school group, the consortium of local small primary schools and the local secondary school. These benefit pupils when they arrive and depart and promote teachers' good professional development.

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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?	2
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	2

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

8 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buckland Church of England Primary School, Faringdon, SN7 8RB

Many thanks for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently and for your helpfulness during the inspection. It was good to talk to you and hear your views. You told me you thought you go to a good school and I agree!

You are well taught and keen to take part in lessons and so you learn well. Your achievement at school is good and by the time you are ready to leave, standards are well above average. Everyone in the school seems to get on so well together and this is important in helping to make sure your personal development is good. You are well cared for by all adults in the school. With good marking and target setting, you receive good advice on the best way to improve your work. The mixture of subjects and topics you study is good and there is a great variety of after schools clubs, as you know.

An important reason why the school is good and improving is the way the headteacher and other teachers lead and manage the school. They really work hard to make sure you enjoy school life and get on well.

Almost all schools could be improved. These are the main things that should be better:

- all lessons should be fast-moving and you can help by always being ready to learn. You should be given more chances to mark your own work and your classmates' work, too
- the school building does not have enough small rooms for when you work in small groups.

Once again, thanks very much for your politeness and helpfulness when we met. I hope you have a happy new year.

With all good wishes

John Carnaghan

Additional Inspector