

Bushy Hill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125009
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315120
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Curtis
Headteacher	Mr John Abbott
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2004
School address	Sheeplands Avenue Merrow Guildford GU1 2SG
Telephone number	01483 598544
Fax number	01483 598546

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bushy Hill Junior is an average size school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than found nationally. The proportion from minority ethnic groups and those who are learning English as an additional language is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is above average. Pupils' learning difficulties relate mainly to moderate learning needs. The school has awards for, Investors in People, International School, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy School, Partnership with Parents and the Football Association Charter Standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bushy Hill is a good school. The strong and dynamic leadership of the headteacher is driving the school forward very effectively. Parents have great confidence in the work of the school and, like the pupils, are proud to be part of this happy, thriving community. Parents said that there have been some very positive developments in the quality of education provided for their children. One parent wrote, 'We are astounded at the improvement in the morale and self-belief of the pupils over the last two to three years. This is down mainly to the positive attitude of the inspirational headteacher who has turned Bushy Hill into a school whose pupils and parents feel proud to belong to. His commitment and energy appear to be unbounded. We are truly happy parents.' In the last three years, all aspects have improved well and there are now some outstanding features in this good school.

The senior leadership team have been very successful in creating a school where standards are above average and all pupils achieve well. Over the past three years standards have shown an upward trend and are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop excellent personal qualities. The school does not always have high enough expectations for the progress pupils can make over time given their outstanding attitudes to school and learning. In the last year there has been an important focus on writing because national tests in 2007 and assessments identified that standards were not as high as those in reading. This year provisional standards are much higher and the improvement reflects the impact of the school's work in this area which has included training for all staff. Pupils make good progress because teaching is good and the purpose of each lesson is shared with pupils so that they know what they will be learning. In some lessons however, the pace of pupils' learning is constrained by the tasks set in teachers' plans and they are not always as challenging as they should be.

The school's vision of 'Working Together, Learning Together, and Growing Together' is a daily reality and contributes significantly to this inclusive school. Pupils' enjoyment of school is infectious and they have a huge amount of respect for each other and the environment in which they learn. Pupils are inspired and motivated to achieve well by the excellent curriculum that makes a very significant contribution to their outstanding personal development as well as their good academic achievement. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They work successfully with others and are proud of their role in the school and wider community. The school council has a very strong voice in the school and relish the opportunities to be involved in decision-making. Pupils welcome responsibilities they are given and take them very seriously.

Following the last inspection when standards and most aspects of the school were satisfactory, the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and the governing body have successfully worked very hard to revitalise the school. Numbers have increased dramatically and the school has very good standing in the local community. The school's successful track record since the last inspection demonstrates that it has a good capacity to make further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistently high expectations to maximise the rate of progress pupils make in their learning over time.
- Ensure that all teaching matches that of the best by consistently setting tasks that more effectively meet the differing learning needs of each pupil.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The skills pupils have when they start at school in Year 3 are generally above average. There is some variability year on year because of the differing starting points and because each year a number of pupils leave or start the school at different times. In 2007, the national test results showed that standards were well above average overall. In the current year, writing has been the focus and the unconfirmed results for 2008, as well as pupils' work, indicate a significant improvement in the percentage of those reaching or exceeding the expected level for their age in English. The challenge for the school is to sustain improvements made in all areas so that pupils continue to achieve well in all subjects. All pupils make good rates of progress including those learning English as an additional language. Those with learning difficulties are supported well to enable them to achieve as well as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and attendance is above the national average. Pupils are very friendly, polite and mature and their behaviour is excellent. The school council reported that they never had to talk about bad things because they did not take place. One pupil said, 'Teachers are helpful, they care for us, we can talk with them about anything and they keep our secrets.' Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility in school. They make a very positive contribution to the local and wider communities. For example, they raised considerable sums of money to provide a water supply to a school in Nepal that can be used by their local community. Pupils understand how to stay safe and fit, making healthy choices at lunchtimes. They play actively at break times and very many engage in sporting activities during and after the school day. With strong, positive attitudes to learning and a highly developed sense of values, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and the senior leadership team have been successful in raising the quality of teaching since the last inspection, some of which is outstanding. In these lessons, pupils make excellent progress because skilled, confident teaching moves learning along at a good pace and work is sufficiently challenging. This is particularly evident in improved standards and achievement in mathematics and writing. However, some lessons are still too pedestrian and pupils' progress slows as a result. All teachers are conscientious but planning can sometimes be an unnecessary straightjacket and tasks sometimes restrict the pace of some pupils' learning because tasks are not always as demanding as they should be. Pupils want to learn and most behave impeccably throughout their lessons. They are keen to answer questions and give their point of view. In most lessons, teachers use questioning well, encouraging pupils to give extended responses, improving their speaking and listening skills. Books are regularly marked but more guidance needs to be given so that pupils know precisely how to improve their work.

There is good support for pupils who need additional help. Teaching assistants are actively involved in pupils' learning and often their contribution is outstanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has worked hard to develop its links with the local, national and international communities to provide a curriculum that is innovative, exciting and widens the pupils' horizons. The curriculum is very effectively enriched by visits, residential experiences for every year group and a very wide range of clubs. As pupils move through the school the opportunities for learning are expanded. French is taught formally in Years 5 and 6, but its foundations are laid in the earlier years as pupils use it to respond to their register. The link with a Paris school has been extended so that pupils join and share their language and learning. Special days are set aside, like 'Thrilling Thursday' which very successfully develop and widen pupils' interests, achievements and enjoyment. The international dimension of the curriculum is notable with links in every year, culminating with Year 6 pupils going to the Normandy landing beaches, and experiencing a different culture.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support is excellent. Excellent relationships means that pupils place a high level of trust in their teachers and develop confidence and self esteem. This has a very positive impact on their learning because they are prepared to take risks and learn from their mistakes, knowing that their efforts and contributions are valued. The school very effectively supports pupils and their families. One parent wrote, 'Not only has my son made huge improvements in learning but more importantly in social skills and feeling part of his community. I believe the help and support I have received has been second to none.' The arrangements for safeguarding all pupils fully meet requirements. There are excellent partnerships with other schools and organisations to provide the best possible care for the pupils. Pupils have targets, but sometimes these are too broad and do not directly relate to the work they are doing. There are some good examples in lessons of pupils having opportunities to evaluate their own learning and how well they are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders are focused very well on pupils' academic and personal development and the effective work of the strong senior leadership team has driven forward improvements. More teaching is good or better compared with that found at the time of the last inspection because of regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons that has also led to improved standards and achievement. Over the last few years staff have been appointed who have brought additional expertise as well as vigour to their subjects and to the school. There is still more to do. The expectations that the school has for the pace of pupils' progress over time does not always take into account their previous learning. The school's evaluation of itself is accurate and plans are in place to improve the school still further. Governors provide good support. They know the school very well and have taken action to hold the school accountable for its performance. When asked what was the best thing about their school, one group of older pupils agreed that it was the

headteacher because, as one said, 'He has made coming to school so much fun and we get to do exciting activities that help us learn all sorts of things.'

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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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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?	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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	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

14 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushy Hill Junior School, Guildford, GU1 2SG

I am writing to let you know how much my colleague and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you for making us so welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school. We agree that you and your parents are right to be very proud of your school.

We believe that yours is a good school and here are the reasons why.

- You really enjoy being at the school and get on very well with each other and your teachers.
- Your behaviour is excellent and helps you learn well in your lessons.
- You achieve well in your English, mathematics and science lessons. We were pleased to see how well you have done in your writing this year. Well done and keep it up.
- Your headteacher has made sure that there are lots of exciting and interesting things for you to do at school and you told us how much you appreciated this.
- Your teachers work very hard to make sure your lessons are fun and because of this, you said you really enjoy learning.
- By the time you leave Bushy Hill Juniors you are well prepared to move on to your next school because of your excellent personal skills and your good achievement.
- Everyone in the school looks after you really well.

There are two things that we think should be better.

- You are very good learners and because of this, the school should have higher expectations for the progress you can make over time.
- Teachers should make sure that the work they give you always allows you to learn as much as you can in every lesson.

Thank you again for all your help and for being so friendly, polite and interesting to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector