

# Bushfield School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110256
<b>Local Authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	320513
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	277
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Simon Buckingham Shum
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Andrea Curtis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 July 2006
<b>School address</b>	Moon Street Wolverton Milton Keynes MK12 5JG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 314876
<b>Fax number</b>	01908 314876

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Bushfield is a large school serving an area of significant social and ethnic diversity. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and others come from a range of backgrounds, the largest group being of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language is lower than that found in most schools. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is broadly average, although this varies and is higher in some year groups. Most of the LDD pupils have moderate learning difficulties in speech and language and need additional support. In the last inspection of July 2006, the school was judged to be failing to provide an adequate education for its pupils and required special measures. Most of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, joined the school in the last year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Bushfield has made very good progress since its last inspection and is now a good school. Inspectors agree with the school's accurate evaluations that standards are improving very well and that the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Consequently, in accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The pace of improvement has been rapid. Guided by strong leadership, the combined efforts of the staff team have successfully eradicated underachievement. This marks a significant turning point for the school. For the first time in the last four years, standards are in line with those expected in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. National test results last year and current assessments of pupils in all year groups show that pupils achieve well and make good rates of progress in relation to their starting points. Using excellent assessment systems to pinpoint and track how each pupil is doing, including detailed and accurate assessments of basic skills in literacy and numeracy upon entry to Year 3, the staff set realistic and challenging targets for pupils to work towards. This has helped the leadership team and governors to focus on the most important priorities, one of which was to raise standards in reading and writing. Well-devised staff training and support from senior staff has established consistently good teaching in all year groups. A good amount of outstanding teaching and focused support for individuals and groups has helped to accelerate the progress of those who were previously falling behind. Assessments show that the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in English is increasing very well. A good start has been made in raising standards in mathematics and science, although there is still more to do to make sure that all pupils of higher ability reach their expected targets.

Effective partnerships with parents, other organisations and schools make a significant contribution to a good curriculum and to pupils' exceptional enjoyment of school and learning. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They reflect thoughtfully in assemblies and class discussions and particularly enjoy celebrating a wide range of cultures and festivals. There is excellent racial harmony and very positive relationships. Pupils enjoy the wealth of experiences offered, including for example, role-play linked to science fiction when 'Dr Who and the Tardis' is used as a stimulus to inspire imaginative and descriptive writing. Literature, music, dance, drama and sport are strong features of the curriculum. The school has maintained its excellent range of additional activities, including visits and visitors that extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom into the local and wider community. Pupils behave very well and treat each other with courtesy and respect. An older pupil reflected on what she and her friends noted as key improvements to the school, saying, 'It is really enjoyable learning now.' Pupils who need additional support with reading, writing and mathematics, including those who are learning English as an additional language, do well because of the well managed and skilled support provided by learning support assistants.

Pupils feel safe from harm because they are very well cared for by a vigilant and committed team of staff. Pupils' efforts are valued, and are reflected in the excellent quality of work displayed around the school. The art club, like many other after-school clubs, is very popular, and as a result, a very high standard of art, including animal sculptures and models adorn each corridor and display area. Pupils thrive on the opportunities to become school councillors and to support others. They have a very good understanding of healthy and active living through, for example, the fruit stall that is run by pupils, as well as engaging in exercise and sports.

The headteacher's enthusiastic and energetic leadership has inspired others. She sets very high expectations, working closely with a transformed and effective governing body. As the headteacher explained, 'I benefit from an engaged, constructive and critical audience in my governing body'. Together with the new and innovative leadership team, the school has good capacity to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Accelerate the progress of more able pupils in mathematics and science to raise standards still further.
- Build on the best practice evident in the teaching to ensure that more of it is outstanding across the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are average and pupils now achieve well. Although they join in Year 3 with standards that are in line with those expected in reading, mathematics and writing, at the time of the last inspection, pupils were not making enough progress. Since then, strong leadership and much improved teaching have reversed this decline so that standards are now recovering very well. Pupils make rapid progress after entering Year 3, particularly in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills, and they continue to make good progress across the school. Last year's national test results in Year 6 reflected these improvements as pupils reached the standards expected in English, mathematics and science. The most noticeable improvements have been to the progress of more able pupils in English. A lower proportion of pupils reached higher levels in mathematics and science compared with English. Some pupils lack the confidence to solve problems independently in mathematics and science. Pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language make good progress because of skilled support. Those who have difficulty learning to read or who need extra help with writing or mathematics, also make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy school. This is reflected in consistently good attendance rates. They thrive on the many opportunities they have to represent the views of others as school councillors and show initiative when supporting others at break-times. Pupils feel safe and learn to cope with any aggressive behaviour through special anti-bullying lessons or topics, and through developing teamwork when playing competitive sports. Pupils adopt very healthy eating habits and are encouraged to be active during special fitness sessions before school starts. They play an excellent part in their local community through charitable fund-raising, visits to the local area and through the good links with partner schools, clubs and organisations. Well-planned assemblies, music and specially themed weeks or topics help them to reflect on important moral, social and spiritual issues. Pupils are thoughtful and form strong friendships. They learn about the wider world through drama, poetry and music, including the celebration of world faiths and customs. Pupils develop a good understanding of information and communication technology (ICT) and other core skills that prepares them well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The leadership team has accurately assessed the teaching as good right across the school. There is now much greater consistency in teachers' planning compared with that seen at the time of the last inspection. The pace of learning is brisk in the many outstanding lessons seen. Teachers start their lessons by checking that every pupil understands key learning objectives. As a result, pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work with success criteria that helps them to gauge their performance. Accurate assessments help teachers to provide the best support that will move pupils on to the next stage of learning. Pupils have curriculum targets as well as individualised targets that teachers often refer to when supporting individuals and groups. These are helping to accelerate the progress of pupils who were previously falling behind. In some lessons, the pace varies so that questioning is not as focused as it should be, or is repetitive and goes over old ground, which slows the pace of learning. Despite this, there is now enough outstanding practice across the school that is helping to support and improve the teaching in every year group.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The staff provide an extensive range of enrichment that includes the creative arts, sport, visits and visitors. These are having a very positive impact on pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Health education is promoted extremely well through sport, healthy eating and through special topics. The creative curriculum is used well and is reflected in the high standard of pupils' artwork, models and sculptures. The performing arts and music are used very well to widen pupils' experiences. Pupils regularly survey the local area as part of their geography work and there are very close links with local residents, for example, those invited to talk to pupils about their experiences of World War II as part of pupils' history work. High quality writing and poetry about wolves, inspired by stories and literature demonstrate that the pupils are increasingly developing their confidence in writing independently and creatively. The pupils use ICT skills well during their studies.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides excellent pastoral support and care. The staff are very committed to the pupils' all round development and are vigilant so pupils feel safe and settled in school. Very good attention is paid to child protection and to systematic risk assessments of activities and resources. Procedures and policies aimed at safeguarding pupils are robust. Pupils learn and play in clean, safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. Assessment and marking are used exceptionally well to help pupils understand the next steps in their learning. Teachers and support staff regularly monitor pupils' performance and the leadership team are extremely effective in analysing how well individuals are doing. This has led to a marked improvement to standards since the last inspection.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has demonstrated first class leadership since joining the school and as one governor rightly put it, 'has raised everyone's expectations'. Together with her assistant heads, leadership team and governors, they have established a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified the right priorities for improvement. Pupils and parents are pleased with the improvements to the school because the headteacher and staff have incorporated their views through regular audits and surveys. Assessment and target setting are now very sophisticated so that all staff are able to check the progress pupils are making. Senior staff are very skilled at assessing pupils on entry and setting challenging targets that are checked frequently, although they also recognise that there is still more to do to accelerate the progress of more able pupils in mathematics and science. Governors hold the school to account well and provide good support. There are effective systems in place to ensure that they monitor the school's performance.

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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?	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	3
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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	1
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

11 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushfield School, Milton Keynes, MK12 5JG

The inspectors were very pleased to visit your school. You made us feel very welcome. Some of you may remember that just under two years ago your school was not doing well enough and required special measures. We are very pleased to report to you that we think that your school is now a good school. You and your teachers, as well as all the support staff, have worked very hard and have done a great deal to improve the school since it was last inspected. The inspectors were delighted with the displays of your work around the school, especially the Dr Who models and those beautiful animal sculptures made by pupils in the art club, well done these are superb! These are some of the things that inspectors were most pleased about:

- You are very well behaved, polite and considerate.
- Your teachers and support staff are good at helping you to do well and to make good progress in lessons and in sport, art, and music.
- You enjoy school very much and you like taking on special responsibilities such as being school councillors, librarians or supporting others at break-times.
- Your parents are very pleased with you and your teachers and the school works very closely with them and the local community.
- The staff are very good at helping those pupils who need extra help with their reading, writing and mathematics work.
- Your headteacher is excellent. She is working hard with the staff and governors. Together they manage the school well and work hard to keep looking for ways to make it even better.

I have asked your teachers to:

- help some of you do better in mathematics and science so that you reach higher standards
- make sure that all lessons are of the very best quality so that the school can continue to improve.

You can all help by making sure that you always try hard in lessons. Well done and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector