

Buxworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112526
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325622
Inspection date	25 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	61
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gordon Reynolds
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Hartley
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Station Road Buxworth High Peak Derbyshire SK23 7NJ
Telephone number	01663 732426
Fax number	

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector over one day.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- How effective are the leadership and management of the school and is the self-evaluation accurate?
- Is the school making the best use of assessment data and doing all that it can to raise standards and achievement, particularly for boys, and to ensure an appropriate number of pupils gain the higher levels that they are capable of?
- What are quality and standards like in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and is there sufficient use of the outdoor area to promote learning?

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report. Evidence was gathered from observing lessons and pupils' work; scrutinising school documentation, parents' questionnaire responses, records of pupils' achievement and progress; and discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors and with pupils.

Description of the school

This smaller than average sized school serves the local village and surrounding rural area. Most pupils are of a White British background with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is very low. There is a smaller than average proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities but none of these pupils currently have statements of special educational need. All pupils are taught in mixed age classes. Children in the EYFS are taught in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. There has been one new member of teaching staff joining the school this term. There have been significant changes in the governing body since the last inspection. There is an independently run pre-school on the school site which was subject to an inspection parallel to the school inspection and for which a separate report is generated.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Buxworth Primary School provides an outstanding standard of education and care for its pupils. There has been an overall improvement in the school's performance since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. Key issues from the last report have been tackled successfully in the main, although the school is not complacent. Staff continually seek ways to further improve, particularly in terms of the raising the standards and achievement of each cohort. The school has correctly identified key issues for improvement with sensible priorities for action, which are already making a difference. These include initiatives such as taking part in a programme to enhance pupils' writing skills, which has been particularly effective in raising standards in writing, as evidenced in the written work displayed around the school and in pupils' books. Although there were few pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 who sat the end of year tests in 2008, they all achieved well in all core subjects. The headteacher and her staff, with continued good commitment from the governing body, have ensured that the school is highly successful. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and its recent rise in popularity is evidenced in its increasing roll and encouraging EYFS intake.

Standards on entry to the school are mostly in line with what is expected nationally but most children are usually above where they should be by the end of the EYFS, representing good progress. The vast majority of pupils achieve standards in national tests that are significantly above national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. Those who need additional help with their learning or English language are identified quickly and are supported very well to ensure that their achievement is as expected for their age. Pupils consequently make good and sometimes outstanding progress during their time at the school. Local authority and school data confirm that there is a continuing upward trend in Key Stage 1 at the expected Level 2 across all subjects. Not enough pupils in the past have been achieving the higher levels in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 but, by the end of Key Stage 2, the number of pupils achieving the higher levels improves. The school recognises that standards in writing across the school are not as good as in reading. However, it has worked hard to improve writing, which has had a whole school focus, and this is now bearing fruit as standards are improving significantly. The school sets itself challenging targets and has high expectations for its pupils. Teachers are making greater use of assessment data to track pupils' progress and this, along with a continued drive towards improvement, is ensuring greater consistency over different cohorts. Staff have begun to address any gender differences through the teaching methods and the curriculum, including the choice of resources, topics and texts in literacy. There is a reducing margin between boys' and girls' achievement, but the school is right to continue to monitor this closely.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils' enjoyment of school is high and their attendance continues to be above average. They respond well to the school's expectations for good behaviour by taking responsibility for their own actions and genuinely caring about others and their school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older children have been trained as playground leaders, which is a highly successful initiative. Pupils feel safe and secure and know who to turn to for help when they need it. They have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and adopt healthy eating, take regular exercise and participate in sports outside, as well as within, school. The school council makes a positive contribution to the school community. Pupils' good basic skills, proficiency with technology, and ability to work independently or as a group, are all helping to equip them extremely well for the future.

The quality of teaching and learning is, on balance, outstanding. Lessons are of consistently good quality and are frequently better. Teachers provide a thoroughly planned range of activities taking account of pupils' different learning styles and needs. They very effectively take account of pupils' prior learning and give many opportunities for them to apply their knowledge and learn independently. Learning objectives and expectations are clear. Pupils are sure of their targets in core subjects and know what they have to do to reach the next level because of the precise guidance they receive verbally and through high quality marking in their workbooks. Pupils are very well cared for and exceptionally well supported. They are becoming more accomplished at assessing their own work and the school continues to develop this.

The curriculum is outstanding. This is because staff are committed to sharing their ideas and continually consider cross-curricular links to make the most of all opportunities for reinforcing pupils' basic skills in every subject area. There is a wide curriculum, which is continually evaluated. Provision for physical education is excellent and each morning begins with a very popular whole school aerobics session. There is strong provision for information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum. In order to improve the quality of writing, staff have introduced new initiatives to ensure boys develop an enthusiasm for writing. The varied programme of visits, for example a trip to Buxton Opera House, and extra-curricular activities, such as the writing club, adds further to the curriculum and to pupils' achievement. The school now has a cycle of reviewing and monitoring the curriculum in which governors are also involved.

Leadership and management are outstanding overall. The leadership demonstrated by the headteacher has strengthened significantly with a recent and realistic reduction in her class teaching time, ensuring more time can be devoted to evaluating the school and planning strategically. School self-evaluation is accurate and involves a range of stakeholders. They are correct in believing that recent improvements are making a significant impact. Leadership of core subjects is strong. Subject co-ordinators have an outstanding overview of pupils' progress in their subject area and how best to raise attainment. They rigorously scrutinise work samples and analyse their findings carefully. The school use its resources very effectively. It makes efficient use of highly skilled support staff and utilises the skills and knowledge of the whole staff team to good effect. Roles and responsibilities are delegated well. The governing body almost has a full complement and the restructuring of the committees is working well. Governors fulfil their statutory duties but are still too reliant on the school providing them with information, rather than keeping abreast of these themselves. Their meetings are now better structured and more purposeful and individual members have benefited from local authority training. Governor visits into school are more focused and better planned, resulting in governors more fully understanding how well the school is doing. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively at the school. The school contributes exceedingly well to community cohesion, including links with a local secondary school. There is a strong sense of the school being at the heart of the village community. Working in partnership with others is a further strength. Based on its very recent performance in sustaining school improvement, how well it knows itself and the high quality of so many aspects of the provision, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision for children in the EYFS is consistently good and children achieve well. Staff work effectively with the pre-school on site and parents to ensure that children make a smooth transition to Class 1. The family atmosphere and warm welcome the children receive ensure that they settle very quickly into the routines and develop outstandingly well personally, socially

and emotionally. They are happy to come to school, confident to chat to visitors and are keen to learn. There is an appropriate focus on developing children's communication, language and literacy skills, including their awareness of the sounds of letters, in which they are making good progress. Children are beginning to solve simple mathematical problems, reason and work with numbers in practical ways and through a range of indoor and outdoor activities. Whilst the breadth of activities over time successfully embraces all six areas of learning and ensures that children progress well towards the early learning goals expected for their age, the potential of the self-chosen activities is not always maximised. The presentation and delivery of activities are not always as stimulating as they could be. Most children exceed the expected levels for the end of the Reception Year by the time they move into Year 1, which reflects good progress from their mostly average starting points. Staff monitor progress carefully and therefore children receive the individual support necessary to ensure their needs are met. Leadership and management of the EYFS are good and staff are motivated to find ways which lead to continual improvement in provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to increase the number of pupils reaching higher levels in end of year tests, especially at Key Stage 1, and ensure that boys always do as well as the girls, especially in writing.
- Further develop the responsibilities of the governing body in terms of monitoring the school effectively and keeping abreast of all statutory requirements.
- Enhance the existing good practice in the EYFS with a wider range of activities from which children can choose in order to stimulate their curiosity and learning.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buxworth Primary School, Buxworth, Derbyshire SK 23 7NJ

Thank you for being so willing to talk to Mr Matthews and me during the recent school inspection. We found you to be polite and very well behaved as we walked around the school. We can see why you are all so happy here and why the majority of your parents are also pleased with the education you are receiving. We think that you belong to an outstanding school, which is being led very well by Mrs Hartley. Reception children in Class 1 settle quickly and get off to a good start. Pupils in Class 2 and 3 work hard towards their targets and are very well supported so that, by the time they leave the school, they achieve high standards, which are often above what pupils achieve in other schools around the country. This means that you all make good progress and some of you make outstanding progress during your years at Buxworth Primary.

You obviously enjoy your lessons, which are of consistently good quality and made interesting for you by your teachers. Very often, your lessons are outstanding because of your exceptional enjoyment and progress. The work in books, particularly in your 'Big Writing' books, shows phenomenal progress in your writing. You said that you enjoy all of the activities that are on offer very much. The school tries very hard to give you an excellent quality curriculum, including lots of physical activity and opportunities to sing, dance and perform. It is pleasing to know that many of you continue with your interests in music and sport outside of the school.

The governors are doing a good job but we have asked them to keep checking the school very thoroughly and make sure that they understand all about the latest regulations for schools. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that more of you gain the higher levels in tests and that boys do as well as the girls, particularly in writing. We want children in Class 1 to be able to choose from an even wider selection of interesting activities and work outside as often as possible.

Make sure you always know your targets and understand how you can improve your work. We hope that your story writing will just get better and better.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne

Her Majesty's Inspector