

# Bushloe High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120309
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327255
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Alder HMI

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>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	737
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Rixon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Webster
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Wigston Magna Wigston LE18 2DT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01162 881692
<b>Fax number</b>	01162 880856

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school takes pupils from a wide geographical area in Wigston, and increasingly also takes pupils from Leicester. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is in line with national figures, though slightly more speak English as an additional language. While a slightly larger proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs than is the case nationally, the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is roughly the same.

The school was awarded specialist status for the arts in September 2008. Since the last inspection the school has received the following national awards: Healthy School, Eco School, Sports Mark Silver, Art Mark, Diana Award Certificate of Excellence and Anti-Bullying Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Bushloe High School provides an outstanding education for its pupils. In its highly supportive and stimulating atmosphere, pupils flourish. The progress they make in their work in Year 6 is good and in Years 7 to 9 it is outstanding. The pupils' personal development and well-being are very impressive. A very high proportion of the parents who communicated their views to the inspection team were praising of the school's work. The school's success owes a great deal to the exceptionally strong sense of purpose of the headteacher. The capacity to improve is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is a significant amount of teaching which is outstanding, but marking does not always show pupils clearly how to improve their work, and in some lessons teachers do not assess pupils' understanding well enough to ensure that they are fully challenged. The curriculum, including for those in Year 6, provides very well for the range of pupils' interests and abilities. It follows on very well from the work that pupils have done in their previous schools. It is also admirably broad, and while placing the necessary emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, this is not done to the detriment of pupils' broader education. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are outstanding. There is excellent use of data to keep track of how well pupils are doing against very challenging academic targets. The resulting information is used very effectively to identify any underachievement, and a good range of strategies is employed to help pupils do as well as they can. There is a highly effective strategy for the early identification of vulnerable pupils. This is used very successfully to focus the staff's mentoring of pupils, a support which some older pupils also provide to younger ones, and to arrange for support from professional agencies when their expertise is required.

Pupils greatly enjoy school. They speak of a friendly atmosphere and approachable teachers. They receive high-quality care from staff. A Year 6 pupil commented, 'Because teachers think positive things about you, it makes you think you can do more and more.' Year 9 pupils spoke of their regret that they will soon be leaving. Their attendance is outstanding, a testament both to their enjoyment of school and to the work the school does to encourage it. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is very low. Pupils are safe and are very aware of health and safety issues. Behaviour throughout the school is outstanding. Pupils show a maturity that belies their age. They make a considerable contribution to the school and local communities. Pupils' ability to work both collaboratively and individually, along with the above average standards they reach in literacy and numeracy, their good development of skills in information and communications technology and their understanding of enterprise, mean that pupils are outstandingly well prepared for later study and the world of work. Data received by the school show that the proportion of its former pupils who, after the age of 16, continue in education or go to jobs with training is very high compared to the national average, as is the proportion who achieve five high grade GCSE passes.

Leaders evaluate the work of the school and its impact on pupils very well. The monitoring of the work of subject departments by subject leaders is good overall, though it is not yet ensuring that inconsistencies in teaching have been ironed out. The school's specialist status has had a good impact on the school's effectiveness, for example in broadening teaching approaches, such as using art in the teaching of religious education. It has helped to enrich both the curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities. Most of the attainment targets for the specialist subjects have been exceeded.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Further improve teaching and learning by ensuring that the role of subject leaders in monitoring and bringing about subsequent improvement is consistently effective.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

The progress made by pupils from when they join the school in Year 6 to the end of Year 9 is outstanding and the standards they reach are above average, particularly so in mathematics. In recent years pupils have made outstanding progress in Years 7 to 9. The school has consistently been in the top 1% of schools for the progress made by pupils in this age group, compared with similar pupils elsewhere. Progress in Year 6 has been somewhat less than this. However, the school has increased its emphasis on this age group and the result is an improvement in their progress. The current data show that progress made in the two terms that pupils attend the school before they are tested is now good.

All groups of pupils make at least good progress, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils show high levels of consideration to each other and to staff when moving between lessons and at break and lunchtimes. It is also demonstrated by their support for, and willingness to follow, rules in all subjects and especially practical lessons. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. In lessons pupils concentrate well, work hard, respect the views of others and are willing to be active participants in their learning. The vast majority of pupils take responsibility for their own actions.

Bullying is infrequent, and any that does occur is dealt with effectively and quickly. Pupils feel they have a number of individuals they can go to for support, including both teachers and fellow pupils, should the need arise. Such support contributes greatly to producing a safe and enjoyable learning experience.

Pupils make a considerable contribution to their community. They organise a number of events to support each other through a range of pupil bodies, including a highly effective pupil council. Other groups within the community are well supported by charity events, drama productions and musical events. The impact of such arrangements is considerable and results in a very inclusive and cohesive school community.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

There are very good relationships between pupils and teachers. This results in all groups of pupils having the confidence to develop their learning. This was evident in an outstanding mathematics lesson in which a pupil attempted, successfully, a quite intricate manipulation of a geometric shape on an interactive whiteboard, leading to spontaneous applause from the rest of the class.

Teaching is characterised by good planning, good subject knowledge, a good pace and searching questions that are often well matched to pupils' abilities so that all are challenged. This produces a high level of engagement from pupils. However, the use of questions is inconsistent. In some lessons, particularly where the objectives are not sufficiently clear, questions are not well enough used to assess pupils' progress and challenge them further. Teachers' marking is also not consistently effective. There is some good practice, but the comments made are not always helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The excellent curriculum is an important factor in pupils' outstanding progress and enjoyment of school. All subjects are given a good share of teaching time in Year 6 and beyond.

Opportunities are provided for pupils to devote more time to areas that interest them in Year 9. For example, there is the opportunity for enhanced modern foreign language study or an additional design and technology option. All pupils are provided with the opportunity to study GCSE mathematics and higher attaining pupils visit the upper school each week to extend their learning.

There is a large number of extra-curricular activities, both on site and through a range of trips across the United Kingdom and abroad. This extra provision serves to enrich and extend the learning experiences of the pupils very well. It also helps pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures, beliefs and faiths and their roles and responsibilities as citizens in a multicultural society.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

There is a highly effective strategy for the early identification of vulnerable pupils through liaison with the primary partner schools, and by communication with pupils themselves through a Year 6 questionnaire. This early identification triggers a wide range of interventions which support pupils very effectively and include the use of a wide range of outside agencies, such as the counsellor. Safeguarding procedures are robust, comply with legal requirements and are regularly reviewed.

The school ensures that all groups are well cared for. For example, small group language sessions, lunchtime clubs, and a dedicated coordinator are provided for pupils who have recently arrived in the country, to help them settle in and reach their potential. One pupil in this scheme commented, 'I would tell anyone coming to Bushloe, "Don't worry, because this school is going to help you a lot."'

The school's comprehensive strategy for improving attendance is highly effective. Productive relationships mean that pupils and parents work in genuine partnership with staff, because there is a climate of trust.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Expectations of what can be achieved at the school are very high as a result of the strong, principled and strategic leadership provided by the headteacher and her senior team. Plans for

improvement are based upon very clear evaluations of the school's work. For example, in subject departments analyses are carried out of the areas which pupils find difficult and this information is used to develop teaching approaches further. There are regular reviews of teaching quality, but the outcomes are not always used well enough to ensure that the best practice is shared across the school. The governing body provides strong support and challenge to the school. It is very well informed and plays an important role in shaping the strategic direction the school takes.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is outstanding. It does much to promote good relationships and understanding between different groups in the school and its success in this is clear. Strong links have been developed with schools in Britain as well as internationally. Its specialist status is used to good effect in terms of developing close and productive links with other schools in the area.

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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

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
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	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	1
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushloe High School, Wigston, LE18 2DT

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed by your friendliness, your helpfulness, your excellent behaviour and your maturity, particularly in the way some of you act as mentors to younger pupils and your involvement in decision making, for example through the school council.

We found that your school is outstanding. You make outstanding progress in your work and you develop very well personally. You benefit from good teaching, which is sometimes outstanding, an outstanding curriculum which gives you opportunities to develop your own interests in Year 9, and a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

Your headteacher and the other senior leaders put a lot of effort into making sure that you are safe and enjoy school while making rapid progress in your learning. The fact that your attendance is so good shows how much you enjoy school. The work done to make sure that you all settle quickly when you join in Year 6 is very successful. Your school is a very caring community. It is also very concerned that you achieve as well as possible in your work. The ways in which your progress is tracked, and those of you who may be falling behind are helped, are very effective.

There is one suggestion we have made to help your school become still more successful. It is that the good checks made on the quality of teaching should be used more consistently to help to ensure that there are even more outstanding lessons.

Very best wishes for your future.

Yours faithfully

Alan Alder

Her Majesty's Inspector