

# Buildwas Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123356
<b>Local Authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327889
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	87
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	18
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Griffith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Whittaker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Buildwas Road Buildwas Telford TF8 7DA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 432135
<b>Fax number</b>	01952 432135

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and investigated the following issues: the rate of pupils' progress since September 2008, and whether the measures taken to improve writing are working; how well the school promotes community cohesion; and how well the new EYFS unit is working in relation to children's progress there.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation and its assessment records; the sampling of lessons, of children's work and teachers' planning; discussions with the headteacher, other staff and pupils; and an analysis of the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a popular small, rural primary school. Only about half of the pupils come from its immediate area, while others live a considerable distance away, and come on the school bus. All four classes contain two year groups. An increase in numbers since the previous inspection has enabled the school to set up a separate EYFS unit for nursery- and reception-aged children. This happened in September 2008, although the classroom for the unit was only completed in the week before the inspection. The proportion of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 is considerably higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, significantly so in some year groups. Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. Effective leadership and management have resulted in good teaching that enables all pupils to achieve well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, as their good attendance shows. Standards were significantly above average in Year 2 in 2008, and are at least above average in the current Year 2 class. They have risen faster than nationally over time in Year 2, where the population is usually stable. All of this starts with the good provision and the children's good progress in the EYFS.

The small numbers in each year group cause some variations in standards from year to year, as does the proportion of pupils arriving in school after Year 2. The as yet un-validated results and the school's records show that standards were above average in Year 6 in 2008, and that pupils made good progress overall. This was achieved despite the year group having 40% of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and 50% of pupils joining it after Year 2. The standard of work seen in the current Year 6, a high proportion of whom also have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is at least average. Several elements are above average, especially in writing, reflecting the success of the school's prompt action to improve writing after the gap between writing and reading widened in 2008. Writing is promoted well in all subjects. Pupils have a good understanding of how to write in different styles and for different purposes, and they use a well developed vocabulary to communicate with their intended audiences. Pupils use their literacy and information and communication technology skills well in all subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, because of the good support they receive, including from well briefed teaching assistants.

Relationships are excellent throughout the school, and between the school and the local community, as is the school's partnership with others in promoting pupils' learning and personal development. Parents praise the school for not letting the distance they live from it disadvantage their children in any way. A high proportion of pupils attend the good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available to them. Parents praise the 'family atmosphere' the school successfully generates, and the way 'children who attend Buildwas look after each other'. The care, guidance and support provided for the pupils are excellent. Pupils are well known to all staff, and safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are rigorously applied. Pupils report that there is little or no bullying, and that they trust the staff to deal with any untoward behaviour promptly and fairly. The school's good systems provide a solid base for this to happen.

Teachers assess and track pupils' learning well. They use assessment information effectively to set targets for pupils and to plan work at different levels to meet the different ages and stages of learning in their classes. Pupils know their targets and how to reach them. Teachers' marking is perceptive and gives pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do next. Teachers also involve pupils well in assessing their own work and determining how to improve it. If necessary, pupils work alongside a higher or lower age group, ensuring their work is at the right level to increase their learning. The curriculum is planned well to enable this to happen. In lessons, however, teachers occasionally talk to or question pupils for too long. This sometimes slows the pace of learning for older or more able pupils because they do not move quickly enough onto independent or group work, to help them forge ahead.

The school promotes community cohesion well. All pupils are members of one or other of the various councils set up to give them a voice in the school. Pupils know how they fit into the

school and the local community and how they can help to improve the school. The school's links with, for example, Russia and Australia, are successfully developing in the pupils a good understanding of the global community in which they live. The work done by pupils in Years 3 and 4 on Australia is particularly impressive. Pupils learn about the major world religions and they visit different places of worship, which parents also praise. Relatively speaking, however, their understanding of the diversity of culture in the United Kingdom, although improved since the previous inspection, is the least well developed aspect of cultural development. The school is actively seeking ways to improve this and has begun to identify opportunities within the curriculum. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle, which led to the school achieving a gold award for its work in this area. Overall, they leave the school as mature and confident young people, well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

The good teamwork that the headteacher has established amongst all staff kept the school moving forward well during her absence for part of last term. Staff moderate pupils' work together, sharing ideas and helping each other to improve. The headteacher checks all of this rigorously, especially the impact it has on pupils' progress. She and the governors set a very clear direction for the school's work, which is aimed at ensuring every pupil achieves as much as possible during their time at the school. Governors know the school well. They take their role as its 'critical friend' seriously, visiting classrooms, analysing outcomes, and looking at ways they can help foster further improvement. The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate, and the outcomes are fully incorporated into its well constructed improvement plan. All of this gives the school good capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Although it varies from year to year, in most years, children's attainment on entry to Nursery is broadly as expected for their age. Children make good progress in the EYFS and standards are at least average and sometimes above by the end of Reception in all six areas of learning.

Good induction procedures help children and their parents settle quickly into the well established routines. The excellent partnership with parents established at this point sets the tone for the rest of the time the children are at the school. Good attention is paid to promoting children's welfare and well-being. Children are rapidly getting used to the new space, moving freely from one activity to another, indoors and out, carefully supervised by the staff. Staff successfully teach children how to listen carefully, take turns and be sensitive towards each other, and older reception children do these things well. Good leadership and management ensure that the well-planned curriculum, securely based on the latest guidance for the EYFS, gives due attention to the uniqueness of each child. Children's progress is recorded meticulously, both formally and informally, and their learning moved on as they develop different skills.

Children have many opportunities to develop early reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, they learn to 'sign in', writing their names as they register themselves on arrival, and lively phonics sessions help them to make links between letters and sounds. Older reception children form letters accurately and are beginning to construct simple sentences well. Children take part wholeheartedly in role-play activities, for example, retelling the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' using masks. They use their imagination well, altering the story to suit their own ideas. Staff do not capitalise enough on opportunities to promote writing during role play including, for example, in the 'café' set up in the classroom. Overall, however, children leave the EYFS well prepared for their work in Year 1.

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

- Ensure sufficient challenge and pace in all lessons, where necessary moving pupils on to focused group and individual work sooner.
- Strengthen pupils' awareness of the range of cultures in the United Kingdom to complement fully their understanding of different cultures across the world.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**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?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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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	2
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	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

<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?	2
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>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

16 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buildwas Primary School, Telford TF8 7DA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. Having looked at your books, watched your lessons and checked out key aspects of the school's work, we concluded that you go to a good school. This very much matches what you and your parents told us.

The staff care deeply for each one of you. You in turn care for each other and you behave really well. You told us there was little or no bullying and that the systems for managing behaviour are fair. Your teachers plan exciting work for you that challenges you to work hard and you rise to this challenge well. They track your progress well and make sure you understand what you need to do to improve. All of this helps you to learn faster. We particularly noted the improvement in your writing this year. You clearly enjoy school very much and want to do well. You also play your part really well in helping to improve the school through your work on the various school councils and in your contributions to the local community. The headteacher and governors keep a close check on how well you are taught and are learning, and readily make little adjustments to the work of the school to try to make sure you all do as well as you can. The new unit for nursery and reception children has got off to a good start and is helping children there to make good progress in all aspects of their learning.

We noticed that sometimes in lessons, your learning slows when teachers do not move you quickly enough onto group or individual work. We also noted that while you have a good understanding of different religions and cultures around the world, you are a bit less knowledgeable about those in the United Kingdom. We have therefore asked the school to do two things.

- Make sure you have the right sort of work to do in all lessons, where necessary moving you onto group and individual work sooner.
- Strengthen your awareness of the range of cultures in the United Kingdom to complement fully your understanding of different cultures across the world. You can help by continuing to work hard and by finding things out for yourself about different cultures. We hope that all of this will help you to enjoy learning even more, now and for the rest of your lives. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector