

# Buckland Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135237
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	329061
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Scott

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	277
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graeme Ross
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Karima Mould
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<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>	Berrycroft Road Staines TW18 1NB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01784 455 022
<b>Fax number</b>	01784 460 351

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school opened in September 2007 as a primary school formed from the amalgamation of the junior and infant schools on a shared site, following a review of pupil places by Surrey County Council in 2006.

The junior school came out of special measures in July 2007 following a change of leadership in May 2006. Two interim headteachers led the school until its closure in August 2007. The headteacher of the infant school was appointed headteacher of the amalgamated Buckland Primary School. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below that nationally and the proportion of pupils with specific learning difficulties is average. Compared with the national picture, a lower proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these, a small proportion have a home language other than English. The school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through two Reception classes. The school has achieved the Activemark Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Buckland Primary provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education, but one that is improving rapidly under the positive leadership of the headteacher. As a result of the amalgamation, the school has undergone significant changes of senior leaders and teaching staff. The school's priority during this period has been to establish a shared vision to ensure the care and well-being of all pupils and staff. This has brought about much-needed stability and raised the confidence of staff, parents and carers. As one parent commented, 'Every member of staff loves our children'.

At the heart of this positive picture is the clear educational direction set by the headteacher, enthusiastically supported by the senior leadership team. Together they are implementing many well-considered new initiatives to raise achievement in the school. It is still too early to evaluate their full impact but school leaders have the full support of staff, parents and a strong governing body. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall as a result of the care taken to improve the way the school is led and managed. For example, leaders and managers have an accurate and honest view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set challenging but realistic targets for improvement. There are new and systematic procedures for monitoring how well the school is performing. Some middle leaders are new in post and the school recognises further training and coaching is a priority in order to help them become more skilful in raising standards. Senior leaders have also focused intensively on improving the skills of teachers to help pupils make faster progress and reduce underachievement. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but the quality of feedback to pupils within individual subjects, especially through marking, remains inconsistent and does not always give effective advice to enable them to improve.

Improvements in classroom practice have contributed successfully to the school's drive to address underachievement in most year groups and some good and some outstanding teaching were seen. However, achievement is satisfactory because teaching, while satisfactory or better, is not consistently good, particularly in providing the right level of challenge for pupils of higher ability. Consequently, standards overall are average in mathematics and science although slightly below average in English because writing across the school, particularly that of boys, is not yet consistently good enough. The current progress of the majority of pupils is at least satisfactory. The unvalidated test results for this year show that pupils in Year 6, particularly the most able, did not achieve their targets, given their attainment in Year 2.

Buckland prides itself on being an inclusive school. Pupils report that they feel safe within the school community. Relationships are harmonious and pupils behave well. Their personal development is good. Because of the interesting and improved curriculum, they are growing well in their understanding of the many different traditions in the school and its local community. Pupils enjoy school, attend regularly, participate well in clubs and sport, and value the sound care, guidance and support the school provides. Many are proud of the work they do for the school and the wider community. They prepare satisfactorily for their future education and economic well-being because of improvements in their basic skills and through the school's good links with secondary partners. The overwhelming majority of parents are fully supportive of the school and are pleased at the 'visible improvements' since the amalgamation. As one parent commented, echoing the views of many, 'I think Buckland is now a fantastic school, and I'm so glad that my children go there!'

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children enter Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are generally expected for their age in all but linking sounds and letters. The needs of all new children are assessed with increasing accuracy. However, this information is not used well enough to inform planning for further learning. Nevertheless, good routines ensure children settle quickly and happily into the school. As a result, they make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are in line with those expected at the end of the EYFS.

The recent improvements to the outdoor learning environment have made a positive contribution to the children's physical development. Children's welfare is given a high priority. They feel secure and develop positive relationships with both adults and other children. The recently appointed EYFS leader has cultivated a cohesive team, keen to explore new initiatives and promote the children's progress. However, the quality of teaching and learning remains variable. Where teaching assistants are deployed appropriately during whole-class activities, children are challenged and supported well. When introductions are overlong, the pace of learning slows. However, there is a good blend of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to choose for themselves. The free flow from indoor to outdoor learning during 'free-choice' activities is not always sufficiently well planned in order to maximise children's learning and development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the quality of marking improves to match the best so that pupils can benefit from more precise advice on how to improve.
- Raise standards by improving the quality of teaching and learning to that of the best, particularly in the level of challenge for the more able pupils.
- Intensify the school's efforts to improve pupils' writing skills so that all pupils can achieve their best.
- Extend the capacity of leaders to manage their areas of responsibility through coaching and training.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average overall and all groups of pupils, including those with specific learning, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, achieve at least satisfactorily. Pupils join the school with a range of skills that are in line with those expected for their age, but some have weaknesses, particularly in verbal communication. By Year 2 pupils achieve slightly above-average standards. As pupils pass from Years 3 to 6 progress is steady so that overall standards at the end of Year 6 are close to national averages. The 2008 provisional test results for Year 6 show pupils' overall rate of progress in English, mathematics and science to be broadly satisfactory. There is clear evidence that standards are improving as some younger pupils are working at levels that are in line with and slightly above national expectations.

The rise in standards from the previous year in mathematics and science owes much to the school's focus on developing pupils' practical investigational skills. The more able pupils achieved

less well than expected, however, and did not meet the school's challenging targets. There was a small increase in pupils' progress in reading but their achievement in writing remains a weakness across the school. The school has now identified a number of ways forward to support pupils through providing stimulating practical activities on which to base writing and to stretch the more able pupils.

Pupils at the early stages of learning English make fast gains in fluency because of the sharp focus on listening and speaking skills, and on the use of drama. Pupils with specific learning difficulties, including those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, make satisfactory progress because of the high levels of individual attention they receive.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school, do their best to be on time for lessons and have positive attitudes to learning and this is reflected in the harmonious and inclusive relationships that prevail at the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and are happy to be at school. They understand the clear guidelines for good behaviour and the consequences for inappropriate actions. As a result, pupils work well together in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Pupils appreciate the importance of staying healthy and take part in sports and other physical activities, and this reflects their commitment to fitness. They know how to choose healthy lunches and are aware of the benefits of a healthy diet. The school council provides pupils with an influential voice that has brought positive changes around the school. For example, new outdoor playground equipment has recently been provided. Pupils enjoy the buddy system at break times. In the wider community, pupils' contribution is good, through a range of fundraising activities and charity events such as 'Help for Heroes' and Children in Need. Pupils' standards and progress in acquiring basic and social skills ensure that they are adequately prepared for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Warm working relationships are reflected in the pupils' confidence in their teachers. This confidence, and teachers' enthusiasm and commitment to the pupils, helps pupils engage purposefully in learning.

Good pace, humour and high teacher expectations help pupils stay on task and concentrate well in many lessons. In an outstanding writing lesson, for example, genuine excitement was generated during the well-considered practical work activity that brought the topic to life and enabled pupils to achieve at the highest level. Despite these strong features, the school recognises that there are still areas for development. The quality of lesson planning is inconsistent as some teachers do not plan activities that cater well for the differing needs of learners, especially for the more able pupils. Teachers' use of challenging questioning in order to check pupils' understanding is currently underdeveloped and introductions to some lessons are overlong which leaves less time for pupils' to work independently.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The well-planned topic-based curriculum allows all pupils to be fully included in learning activities. The literacy and numeracy curriculum is well focused to extend pupils' skills. Curriculum is further enriched by contributions from outside speakers and visits to places of interest such as zoos, museums, churches and synagogues. A real strength of the curriculum is the linking of such trips to topics of study. For example, visits by the Life Experience bus, enlivened pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles and their study of science. The school provides a rich outdoor curriculum, using the local environment to study and take part in fishing, gardening and ecological activities. A range of sports lessons and clubs contributes very well to pupils' positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Pupils relish the opportunity to study French and the opportunities to take part in the many out-of-hours clubs which range from gardening to singing in the choir.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school cares for its pupils well and they in turn support and care for one another. Pupils feel safe at school and report that there is always someone they can turn to if they have a problem. The well-understood routines of school life create a very orderly and safe community. The school has robust systems for safeguarding which are fully understood by both pupils and staff. The school has initiated a whole range of effective strategies to improve attendance. Pupils with learning difficulties are valued and, as a result, are able to play a full part in school life. There are good links with outside agencies to support the school's work.

Although systems to support pupils' personal development are well established, the academic guidance that pupils receive is less secure. The quality of marking is inconsistent in quality across year groups. Pupils fully understand their English and mathematics targets but they are not always given advice on the next steps for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The quietly determined and reflective headteacher has a clear view of school development. She has very high expectations and has established a new senior leadership team committed to raising standards. A number of middle and senior leaders are new in post and some are at an early stage in the development of their management skills. As a result, some subjects are making better progress than others. Processes for monitoring pupils' performance are beginning to be established at whole-school level but are not yet consistently well implemented throughout the school. Since opening, the school has made good progress in setting up whole-school systems and procedures to raise attainment. Although 'green shoots' are beginning to emerge, the impact of many of these initiatives is not yet fully evident in all areas.

Governors visit the school regularly, know the school well and provide appropriate challenge and have been particularly supportive in establishing the new direction for the school. There are strong partnerships with the local secondary school and external support agencies, which has enabled the school to help successfully not only its pupils but also their families, promoting their sense of belonging within the local community.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

27 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buckland Primary School, Staines, TW18 1NB

Thank you very much for making us so welcome and for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We did enjoy our visit. We were very pleased to hear from you how much you enjoyed school and to see how well you worked in lessons.

We think you go to an improving and satisfactory school that not only helps you to learn but looks after you well. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the way you get on together.

There are many things that are special about your school but we would like to single out your teachers and helpers who encourage and support you in lessons, at breaks, and in the interesting clubs and visits. You say grown-ups are always willing to listen if you have a problem. You enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables and know how to choose healthy appetising meals. The school is run well by your headteacher and staff. They try hard to make sure you have the best possible education.

Before we left, we talked to your teachers about how the school could do even better. They agree with us that staff need to do some more work with you to help you make better progress in writing so that it matches progress in other subjects. We also suggested that your teachers need to ensure that they help and challenge everyone, particularly the more able in their class, to achieve the very best for themselves. We have also asked leaders to monitor the work of their areas more closely to ensure that you receive clear advice on how to improve.

We would like to wish you and your school every success for the future and hope that you to continue to attend well, work hard and cooperate fully with your teachers.

Yours faithfully

David Scott

Lead Inspector