

Bucklebury Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109955
Local Authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	337406
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Zena Muth
Headteacher	Philippa Rowe
Date of previous school inspection	26 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed five teachers and seven lessons, and held meetings with the governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 76 questionnaires from parents and carers, 66 from pupils and 14 from staff. The team also looked at documents and policies, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils, all the information the school had collected about the pupils' progress and the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and progress, particularly in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 and of boys in English in Key Stage 2
- the use of assessment in lessons and the involvement of pupils in checking their learning
- the effectiveness of middle leaders' monitoring and evaluation

Information about the school

Bucklebury is smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, is average. There is Early Years Provision in one Reception class. The school has many awards, including the Healthy Schools award for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bucklebury is a good school where pupils enjoy their education, including the many opportunities they have to take on responsibility. Pupils' views, when asked to describe their school, are summed up well in the following comment, 'It's fun and there are lots of opportunities to help you learn.'

Since the previous inspection, there have been many improvements, including the progress pupils make and in the standards that they attain. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards are securely above those found nationally. This represents good progress from their starting points in Reception that are just above average overall. Monitoring of pupils' progress has improved and has ensured that any relative underachievement is identified and addressed early. Progress is now much more uniform throughout the school. A strong focus on literacy has ensured that the progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 has risen to match that in other years. The progress of boys in English in Key Stage 2 has also risen and is good, particularly in reading. A key strength of the school is its good care, guidance and support, particularly of its most vulnerable pupils. Good support in lessons and in small group sessions has ensured that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good, in line with their peers.

The stimulating environment, along with good behaviour, plays a significant part in pupils' learning. The majority of teaching is good. However, in some lessons, pupils are not always given clear enough guidance to be able to reflect on how well they are learning. Management of teaching and learning is good and there is evidence of some teachers improving their practice. However, lesson observations do not happen often enough and are not always clearly focused on learning. Whilst middle leaders do observe lessons, these are not always formal enough or evaluative enough at present. This has meant that improvements in teaching and learning have not always occurred as quickly as they might have done.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about all aspects of school. However, it is clear that the school does not engage well with all parents and carers at present, in areas such as seeking and taking account of their concerns or in helping them to support their children's learning.

The headteacher and her leadership team have instilled a sense of common purpose amongst all staff so that they have a very clear sense of what the school is trying to achieve. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Along with recent improvements, this shows that the school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- providing clear success criteria for learning so that pupils can be more reflective and involved more in checking how well they are doing in lessons
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 - observing lessons more frequently, with a clear focus on learning, to help improve more quickly aspects of teaching and learning that are less strong
 - developing the role of middle leaders to include more formal, evaluative observation of lessons.
- Engage better with all parents and carers, through more effective two-way communication by:
 - offering parents and carers increased opportunities to celebrate success and voice concerns
 - showing parents and carers more clearly how they can help support their children's learning
 - keeping parents and carers more closely informed of their children's progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The quality of learning and progress in lessons is good overall. This is true for all groups of pupils throughout the whole school. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and their good behaviour contributes well to their learning. Inspection evidence from lessons confirms that attainment is rising. A close focus on learning built around pupils' interests has helped to raise attainment in writing. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were seen enthusiastically analysing the results of sports day to glean key information. Subsequently, each pupil confidently shared their reports with the rest of the school during an assembly. Similarly in mathematics, problem solving has stimulated pupils' interest. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were seen cooperating well to gather and present information on what type of holidays people have. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. This is helped by their good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, above-average attendance and the mature way that they cooperate with each other.

Pupils feel very safe and secure in school and understand issues such as safety when using the internet. Pupils understand well what it means to have a healthy lifestyle, recognised in national awards, and the benefits of taking on responsibilities, for example as 'Funky Friend Finders' at breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils have a strong voice through the school council and are very proud of initiatives such as helping to design the new school library. This is just one of the ways that pupils contribute well to the school and wider community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of other cultures, despite being in a school where most of the pupils are White British. This is fostered well through celebrating the cultures of the pupils of other ethnic groups and by visits and visitors.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy learning and are engaged because lessons move forward at a good pace, with a range of interesting activities that capture their imagination. An example of this was a in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson, where pupils had to solve the problem of what fruits the teacher liked, linked to properties of numbers. Similarly, after a Year 1/2 lesson on the Victorians, pupils excitedly talked about dressing up in Victorian costumes, brought in by a visitor from a local museum. They were particularly intrigued by the bathing costumes and the fact that bare legs were not allowed to be seen. Teaching assistants provide proactive support so that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. A good partnership with a group of schools has enabled the more able pupils to be involved in activities such as publishing a newspaper. Thus all pupils achieve equally well. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers do not always ensure that pupils understand fully what it is they are supposed to be learning. This means pupils are not always able to tell how well they are doing and progress slows. Good assessment was evident in many lessons and there are very good examples of marking, particularly in English, that show pupils clearly how to improve their work. However, this very good

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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practice is not applied consistently across all subjects, meaning that sometimes pupils do not know the next steps to take in their learning

The school looks after its pupils well. The environment is very welcoming and supportive. Pupils say that the adults in school are approachable and that they know that they can go to them for support and help. The school works closely with vulnerable children and liaises well with other agencies to ensure that they get the best available support. There is close monitoring of attendance, which is consistently above average, and good transition arrangements for children transferring to secondary school, meaning that they settle well there. Pupils were eager to tell the inspectors how much they enjoyed the many enrichment activities such as their residential visits. These greatly boost their confidence and contribute well to the mature way they support each other. There is a good range of after-school clubs, but at present these are mainly for the older children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other leaders have provided a strong impetus for improvement across the school and there is a good shared ambition for improvement. Staff are dedicated and committed to the welfare and good achievement of the pupils. Management of teaching and learning is good, leading to improvements in teaching. However, these improvements have not been as fast as they might have been because observations are not carried out frequently enough or clearly focused on previously identified areas for development. There is expertise in teaching that is not being shared well enough at present. Effective systems for school self-evaluation form the basis for identifying weaknesses and challenging targets are set to drive up improvement. Increasingly, underachievement is being successfully addressed quickly. For example, small group intervention work has helped to drive up standards in reading and spelling. Currently, all groups of pupils make good progress, reflecting good equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The school promotes good safeguarding procedures as part of its high-quality care. Community cohesion is promoted well, particularly in the school and in the local community. Good partnerships with local sports clubs have stimulated the pupils' interest in a wide range of sports. Pupils develop tolerant attitudes and have a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. For example, pupils talked excitedly about

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links with schools in India. At present, the school is in the early stages of planning to build links with other schools in the United Kingdom that have a different cultural makeup to its own. The school engages well with the majority of parents, but does not have effective communication with a minority. Governance has improved and is good. Governors know the school well and act effectively as critical friends. They are helping to shape the direction of the school, but are not sufficiently effective enough at present in helping the school to engage well with all parents.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Over a half of the parents and carers returned their questionnaire. Most feel that their children are kept safe and that they enjoy school. This enjoyment was very evident to the inspectors. A minority of parents and carers do not agree that the school seeks their views and acts on them, or that the school is well led. In addition, a small minority do not agree that the school helps them to support their children's learning or informs them of their children's progress.

The inspectors find that the school does seek the views of parents and carers and act on them in many ways. However, at present, there are not enough opportunities for parents to air their views, both positive and negative. Inspectors judge that the school is well led, leading to good outcomes for the pupils. However, they agree that more guidance should be given to parents and carers to help them support their children's learning. Inspectors also agree that the school does not inform parents and carers often enough about their children's progress or use a wide enough variety of methods.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bucklebury Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	49	33	43	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	55	31	40	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	18	44	57	13	17	3	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	22	42	55	7	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	22	29	48	55	7	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	21	39	51	11	14	6	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	34	46	60	3	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	32	39	51	7	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	16	46	60	10	13	5	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	16	37	48	13	17	12	16
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	21	29	38	15	19	13	17
The school is led and managed effectively	14	18	32	42	10	13	17	22
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	26	43	56	7	9	5	6

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bucklebury Church of England Primary School, Reading RG7 6QP

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing how well you learn in class.

Yours is a good school. You are a very happy school community and you look after each other well. The adults in your school care about you very much and look after you very well. You told us that you find your lessons fun and your questionnaires told us that you enjoy school very much and feel very safe there.

There are some things that your school could improve to become even better:

- your teachers should make it clearer for you to tell if you are doing good work in class
- the headteacher and other leaders need to check more carefully how well you are learning in class so that you can make even faster progress
- there should be better communication between the school and all parents and carers
- the headteacher and other teachers should find ways of making it clear to your parents and carers how they can support you in your learning.

You can help by asking your teachers to make it clear to you how you can tell if you are doing well in each of your activities in class.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your time in school.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson Lead Inspector

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