

# Bucknall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120443
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339696
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynn Storer

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	44
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judi Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pamela Curtis (Interim headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Main Street Bucknall Lincolnshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited four lessons and, in doing so, observed the work of all of the school's regular teachers. The inspector also held meetings with the headteacher, members of staff at all levels, pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority. He observed the school's work, and looked at policy documents, pupil performance data and planning and safeguarding information. The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers in the 25 questionnaires that were returned.

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

- whether current standards and the progress that pupils make are both satisfactory and sustainable
- if the quality of teaching is sufficiently consistent to sustain and further accelerate pupils' progress
- whether governance is sufficiently rigorous and thorough to sustain and build further on recent improvements
- whether the school has achieved enough in terms of school improvement during the last year to demonstrate a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

## Information about the school

Bucknall Primary is a very small school that serves its local community and outlying settlements. Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school experiences a high turnover of pupils. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the September following their fourth birthday. There are currently four children in the Reception group but this number is set to rise in September.

After its last inspection, the school entered into a federation with another neighbouring school. That federation is now being dissolved because of the imminent closure of the partner school. During this process, the headteacher resigned his post. An experienced interim headteacher from the local authority's primary leadership team took on the role at the beginning of the current school year. The governing body intends to appoint a new substantive headteacher with effect from September 2010.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Bucknall Primary School is emerging from a challenging period in its development. Over a three year period, the need for a complex and comprehensive restructuring exercise caused school improvement to stall and pupils' standards to decline. A key factor in setting the school firmly on the road to recovery has been the appointment of an experienced interim headteacher. Her highly effective leadership has not only stabilised the school but has injected a renewed impetus into the drive for school improvement. She has brought a rigorous and uncompromising approach to monitoring the school's work and identifying accurately where improvements need to be made. Her sensitivity in managing staffing issues and her strong interpersonal skills mean that staff morale has improved and that there is renewed confidence amongst parents and carers. For example, one parent commented: 'This academic year has seen things improve out of all recognition. Learning seems to have captured our son's imagination and we are delighted with his progress...' These are just some of the reasons why applications for Reception class places for September 2010 have more than doubled. The governing body has acted decisively to ensure that the school has sound capacity for sustained improvement in the future. A firm agreement with the local authority ensures that the current interim headteacher will be able to support the newly appointed headteacher during the transition in leadership, or will remain in post, should a substantive appointment not be possible.

An immediate priority has been to accelerate pupils' progress. Early action to identify and to target underachievement has already had a positive impact. The greatest gains have been in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Here, improvements to the curriculum and to the learning environment, along with regular good teaching, have resulted in good progress and above average standards, particularly in the last year. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now making the expected progress and attaining the expected standard for their age. In Year 6, a legacy of underachievement from the past means that overall standards remain below average. Current standards in writing are considerably lower than those in other key subjects in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, here too, progress over the last year has improved and for some pupils progress has been good.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although examples of good teaching give the school a firm foundation on which to build improved classroom practice. Initiatives are now in place to strengthen teachers' use of assessment for planning lessons that meet the needs of pupils across the age and ability range. However, staff have yet to achieve consistency in related areas, such as establishing clear expectations for the different ability groups, systematically reinforcing pupil's targets and giving pupils clear guidance

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on how to progress to the next level.

Improvements to the curriculum have already had a positive impact on pupils' interest and engagement and thereby on the quality of their learning. The headteacher has rightly identified the need to keep a strong focus on writing throughout the curriculum. Historic weaknesses in the provision for writing have given pupils too little opportunity to write at length or to systematically reinforce writing skills through their work in other subjects. The curriculum gives pupils good opportunities to develop their personal qualities and most outcomes in this area are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However gaps in provision mean that pupils do not learn enough about the richness and diversity of modern society or about issues that affect the wider world. Sound proposals for a wider curriculum reform are in preparation.

The good care, guidance and support that pupils receive result in gains for all groups in respect of their personal development and response to school life. There have been significant benefits to pupils who might otherwise have been vulnerable, for example to underachievement or absenteeism. Behaviour is good and positive relationships at all levels enable pupils to make a good contribution to their school and wider community. Arrangements for safeguarding children are good. They meet current requirements and the school's exceptionally rigorous approach to all matters of health and safety gives pupils a strong sense of safety and well-being in school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
  - giving pupils regular opportunities to write at length
  - adopting a systematic approach to reinforcing writing skills across the curriculum.
  - Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by:
    - ensuring that teachers use assessment information effectively to formulate and communicate explicit expectations and objectives for all pupils
    - improving the advice that pupils receive in conversations with staff and through the targets that teachers set through their marking of work.
  - Strengthen the curriculum by:
    - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to learn about cultural and ethnic diversity in modern Britain
    - introducing a global dimension into pupils' learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve satisfactorily. The school has gone a long way towards halting the decline in standards that has been evident in national test and assessment results over the last three years. Outcomes for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are good. In response to improvements to teaching and the curriculum, pupils' progress has accelerated. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. In the small Year 2 group, all pupils are already exceeding standards normally expected of seven-year-olds. In Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics and science are broadly average, although low standards in writing limit attainment in English and mean that overall standards are below average. Underachievement from previous years has not yet been fully eliminated from the current Year 6 and this means that few, if any, are likely attain above average standards this year. However, rates of progress in other year groups are improving and challenging targets for raising standards further are in place. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made at least satisfactory progress and there are some examples of good gains in recent months. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls.

Almost all pupils behave well and enjoy their work. Most pupils form constructive relationships with staff and say that they feel well cared for in school. They say that staff are 'firm but fun'. Their good understanding of how to keep healthy reflects in play that is energetic, yet sensible and considerate of the needs of younger pupils. Pupils say that they feel really safe when they are in and around the school. Pupils are proud of their school and make a good contribution to its strong sense of community. Junior play leaders, school councillors, the healthy tuck shop team and members of the school's bands and choirs help make the school a pleasant and harmonious place for all. Pupils have begun to play a prominent role in important decisions, such the content of the new curriculum and events involving the school and wider community. The school is well integrated into the local community. Pupils' participation in events such as community celebrations, charity fundraising and outreach to elderly residents mean that they are well regarded in the locality. Levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall but the school's remote location and gaps in the current curriculum mean that cultural development remains a weaker area. Sound basic skills and improving attitudes to learning provide pupils with a satisfactory preparation for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Consistently satisfactory or better teaching underpins pupils' improving progress. However, both teaching and the curriculum have been subject to the school's drive for improvement. While teachers are still striving for greater consistency in some areas of classroom practice, more lessons are now moving towards the good quality needed and that is why pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 is improving. A factor in Key Stage 2 is well-focused intervention including, where appropriate, one-to-one support. In this respect, learning support assistants make a valuable contribution. The interim headteacher's monitoring is rigorous. Consequently, where weaknesses or inconsistencies remain, for example in the use of assessment, these issues remain the focus for whole-school training or individual mentoring. This approach ensures that the school maintains a satisfactory rate of improvement.

The school has ambitious plans for improving the curriculum. Initiatives to strengthen provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are already paying off in children's more secure basic skills on transfer to Year 1. Staff in Key Stages 1 and 2 have agreed that making the curriculum more exciting, relevant and a vehicle for reinforcing basic skills will be at the heart of this improvement but much detailed planning remains to be done before the launch in September. However, clearly stated intentions to strengthen pupils' cultural development, to broaden pupils' horizons by strengthening the global dimension of their learning and to build in meaningful first-hand experiences indicate that initial planning is sound.

Effective pastoral care and support for pupils and their families are strengths of the school. For example, the successful targeting of persistent absenteeism and helping

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families to support reluctant readers have been key factors influencing pupils' improved attitudes, relationships and achievement in the last year.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective are leadership and management?

The reasons why the school has weathered the storms of reorganisation and is emerging with a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement in the future are three-fold. Firstly, effective leadership by the interim headteacher has given staff the desire to improve the school and shown them how to do it. Secondly, a committed and rigorous response from the governing body has ensured that accountability remains strong and that the drive for improvement has not been blown off course. Thirdly, effective support from the local authority in the form of training and consultancy has empowered those in school to do the jobs expected of them and has guaranteed continuity of leadership despite the uncertainties that still remain.

Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are thorough and meet current requirements. Other factors that promote pupils' well-being are good levels of engagement with parents and carers together with sound links with other schools and with outside support agencies. Effective care and support has been important in securing equality of opportunity for all, but especially for potentially vulnerable pupils. The school has a sound understanding of the area that it serves. Pupils' involvement in community projects promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. The school has completed its strategic plan for furthering this aspect of its work but it has yet to be implemented. In relation to the quality of education and current outcomes for pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage vary from year to year because intake groups are small. However, skills on entry are generally within the expected range for four-year-olds. Recent improvements to teaching and provision have resulted in improved progress for children of all abilities. Assessments of children nearing the end of their Reception year show that they have attained virtually all of their early learning goals and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1. Current provision gives children regular access to indoor and outdoor learning opportunities. The work that they receive is well-matched to their age and abilities and there are regular opportunities for them to make choices and to engage in purposeful play. This provision also benefits younger, less mature pupils in Year 1 by improving their transition to learning based on the National Curriculum. The classroom and outdoor areas are 'child friendly', provide easy access to resources and promote independent learning effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works with drive and enthusiasm. The improvements that she has initiated are already firmly embedded and benefiting the children. Some systems, such as that for recording children's attainment and reporting them to parents are outstanding in their simplicity, clarity and effectiveness.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents who returned questionnaires expressed approval of all aspects of the school's work. Parents commented favourably on how much the school had improved in recent months, how well the interim headteacher was leading the school, how dedicated

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and hard working the staff were, how well their children were doing and how happy they were with the school.

Disagreements or concerns were very few. Parents and/or carers raised no common areas of concern.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bucknall 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 inspector received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 44 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	72	6	24	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	76	6	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	64	8	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	56	10	40	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	52	12	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
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)	12	48	13	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	60	9	36	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	68	8	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	64	8	32	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	60	8	32	2	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	68	8	32	0	0	0	0

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bucknall Primary School, Lincolnshire, LN10 5DT

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you. I particularly enjoyed seeing Class 1 weighing eggs: it was good to see how carefully you worked and how much you enjoyed the lesson. I hope that those who went to London on Wednesday had a wonderful time.....and learned a lot.

I thought that you would like to hear about my findings. Yours is a satisfactory and improving school.

Children in Reception get a good start to their time in school.

You are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards are rising but there is still work to be done to improve your writing.

Those who find learning difficult make similar progress to everyone else.

Your good behaviour and the way that you respond in lessons are helping to improve your progress, so please do your best to keep it up!

Staff help you if you have problems and take particularly good care of anybody who is having a hard time.

The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to improve the school.

I have asked staff to do a number of things to help the school improve further.

Help you to improve your writing by giving you regular Big Writing days and more opportunities to write in lessons other than English.

Make sure that teachers tell you exactly what they expect from you and that they give you all the advice you need to get to the next level when they talk to you and when they mark your work. You can help by always doing your best to follow the advice they give.

Plan projects that help you to learn about our society's many different cultural traditions and beliefs and about issues that affect people in the wider world.

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector

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