

Bushey Heath Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 117088 |
| Local Authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 326521 |
| Inspection dates | 26 March 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Martin Beale |

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

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|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 231 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Camilla Woods and Mr James Hughes |
| Headteacher | Mr Steve Perrin |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16–17 January 2006 |
| School address | The Rutts Bushey Hertfordshire WD23 1SP |
| Telephone number | 020 8950 3042 |
| Fax number | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection focused on:

- how well pupils use their computer skills to support their learning
- the effectiveness of action taken by the school to improve the accuracy of assessment for children in Reception
- the extent to which marking helps pupils understand the steps they need to take to meet their targets.

Evidence was gathered from observations of parts of lessons, school assessment data, a scrutiny of pupils' work and school documents, discussions with pupils, staff and the joint chairs of governors, and from the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in as much detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in this average sized school has risen to above average. The proportion of pupils with a mother tongue other than English has also risen, to an average level, although very few are at an early stage of learning English. Free school meal eligibility remains low and the proportion of pupils who need help with their learning is below average. Specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, are identified as the main reasons for higher levels of need. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is through a part-time Nursery and a Reception class. The school has gained Investors in People accreditation on three occasions and was awarded the Active Mark this year.

Key for inspection grades

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| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bushey Heath Primary has improved much in recent years to become an outstanding school. The headteacher has skilfully driven the school forward since the last inspection because everyone understands how its vision of 'Respect, Encourage and Achieve' is to be achieved.

Parents are pleased with the school's efforts for their children. The comment, 'My daughter has enjoyed her time at Bushey Heath and is thriving both academically and socially', reflects the views of many. Several factors contribute to the pupils' outstanding academic achievement and give them a very firm platform for success at secondary school and beyond. Their targets are challenging and everything is done to ensure that they can be achieved. Teaching, based on a good curriculum, is having an outstanding impact on the pupils' learning. The result is that lessons are stimulating and engage the hardworking and highly motivated pupils. Pupils' excellent behaviour and their positive approach to their work generate a purposeful atmosphere in all classrooms.

The pupils make outstanding progress from skills slightly above those expected for their age when they enter the school. The results of assessments of Year 2 pupils rose in 2008 and were very high in all subjects. In 2008 the school was in the top five percent of the country for adding value to pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6. Standards are also very high by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Test results for Year 6 pupils have followed a rising trend since the last inspection, and were very high in all subjects in 2008. Virtually all pupils have reached the level expected for their age in all subjects over the last two years and many have exceeded this, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has ambitious, but realistic targets for this number to be increased further.

Lessons grab the pupils' attention and move their learning forward rapidly. New technology is creatively used by teachers to add interest to their teaching and skilled questioning keeps everyone involved. Pace is generated well by breaking lessons into shorter chunks and refocusing pupils' minds regularly on the aims for their learning. The school is very sharply focused on developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy, and has also improved the teaching of enquiry skills in mathematics and science. By the careful identification of specific learning and language needs, successful programmes tailored closely to individual pupils' needs are in place. These are supported by the skilled team of teaching assistants.

Pupils develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) well. Most reach, and a substantial number exceed, standards expected by the time they leave Year 6. There are examples of pupils using these skills to enhance their learning, such as recording their work on digital camera or working on the two computers in each classroom, but this is not consistently planned across subjects in all classes. The lack of a subject leader to champion its cause has meant that ICT has not made the same progress as English, mathematics and science.

Pupils of all ages take great enjoyment from school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They feel very

commitment to maintaining very high levels of care and welfare. Pupils attend regularly and immerse themselves in the many interesting activities offered both within and beyond the school day. The focus on exercise and competitive sport through links with local schools helps to keep the pupils fit. Leaflets produced by Year 6 pupils giving guidance on the content of packed lunches, further demonstrate their acute understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Visits from police and fire services help pupils to understand how to behave safely and cope with risks they might face in their daily lives. Art and music play a major role in the life of the school and significantly extend the pupils' cultural development. Performances by the choir are memorable and much enjoyed. Very strong links with secondary schools extend the pupils' experiences of science, design and technology and ICT and also provide activities to extend talented mathematicians.

The pupils are justly proud of their contribution to the life of the school, including through the school council and the responsibilities taken by older pupils in developing playtime activities. All pupils show great respect and consideration for others, and they value diversity around them. One parent summed this up well when writing, 'This is a very happy community where children look out for each other and respect other beliefs and values.' They are developing a genuine concern for the environment and how to treat the planet with greater care. The school knows its community well and is responding to changes in the backgrounds of its pupils. It also helps to provide additional services for parents in conjunction with other schools

The headteacher, staff and governors have very high expectations of what the pupils can achieve in both their academic and their personal development. They set the pupils challenging targets, carefully monitor their progress towards them and quickly take highly effective action should anyone look as if they might fall behind. Pupils are fully aware of their personal targets and do their utmost to achieve them. Marking and the feedback the pupils receive from teachers and other staff have improved considerably since the last inspection and are now good. Pupils have the time and opportunity to respond to suggestions for improving pieces of work, and are frequently involved in assessing their own work and that of others. This helps them to become more involved in their learning and to develop skills that equip them well for the future.

Recent staff changes have not dampened the pace of improvement. The school is very effective at adapting its organisation and developing staff so that they quickly become skilled practitioners. Subject leadership by individuals is restarting following a period when developments were led by small teams of staff. New teachers have now gained sufficient experience to take on greater leadership roles. The school has a clear understanding of its qualities based on rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff. The governing body is astutely led by the joint chairs, but several changes of governors have limited their scrutiny of the school through first-hand experience of its work. All staff, governors and pupils are involved in planning for the next stages of the school's development. These factors mean the school is developing good capacity to improve further

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 1**

Children's education gets off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes because activities are interesting and engage their imaginations. Very close attention is paid at all times to their personal development. Arrangements to help the children settle into school life benefit from a close relationship with home. The sharp focus on their well-being results in the children feeling safe and happy. One parent said how their son is 'excited and very much looks forward to attending each day'. The classrooms are stimulating, but the well-used Reception outdoor area is not quite as inviting. The school has plans in place to bring this up to the quality of the area available for children in the Nursery. The children make outstanding progress in all areas, because of the purposeful and well-structured learning environment. Virtually all reach, and the vast majority exceed, expected goals by the end of Reception. The children develop independence, playing and working happily together. Following some concerns about the accuracy of assessments made on the children, the school has put in considerable support, guidance and training for all staff. Information is now gained throughout the day and used very effectively to aid planning for individuals and groups of children. It is also more accurate, giving the school a much clearer picture of how well the children are progressing and where any additional support might be needed. This improvement has been possible because of the very close teamwork between all adults across both classes, and the commitment of leadership to bring about further improvements in the children's academic and personal development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the leadership role played by senior staff so they contribute more effectively to school improvement.
- Plan systematically for pupils across the school to apply more consistently their information and communication technology skills to support and enhance their

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 1 |
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 1 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 1 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 |
| 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 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none age to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 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 |
| How well 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 1 |
| 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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 1 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 |
| 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 | 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



27 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushey Heath Primary School, Bushey, WD23 1SP

You will probably remember that inspectors visited your school not too long ago. I am now writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would just like to thank you for making us feel welcome and for being so ready to share your thoughts about your school. We had a chance to talk to quite a lot of you, and have told your teachers how you were very helpful and polite. It was great to hear how much you enjoy school. It was also good to hear about how safe you feel and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried. You, your parents, teachers and governors are right in thinking that your school is outstanding.

You make excellent progress during your time at school. Nearly all of you reach the standards expected by the time you move on to secondary school and very many of you do better than this. You attend regularly, work hard and behave sensibly. Your teachers make learning interesting and you clearly enjoy extra activities such as music and sporting opportunities. All members of staff help to make sure you are safe and cared for very well. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a huge contribution to the life of the school. You have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. We think that there are two things they could do, so we have asked them to provide opportunities for you to use your computer skills to help you learn better, and involve more staff in helping your headteacher to improve the school further.

I am sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make these improvements. You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to show such pride and enthusiasm for learning.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Martin Beale