

Buxton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120794
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358844
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Joy Richardson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matthew Fruish
Headteacher	Deborah Leahy
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six lessons and four teachers and had meetings with pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books and records of progress. They scrutinised responses to questionnaires by pupils and staff, and 47 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the school's expectations of what pupils can achieve are high enough for all age groups.
- How well pupils calculate in mathematics.
- What impact can be seen from the introduction of initiatives to improve pupils' literacy skills?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. It serves Buxton and the surrounding area, including a new housing development at Badersfield. Stability in the school population is lower than in most schools, and many pupils join the school late. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. Pupils come from diverse social backgrounds. Almost all are White British and none speaks English as an additional language. At its last inspection, in February 2009, the school was judged no longer to require special measures. A new, permanent headteacher took up her post September 2009, and two new class teachers joined the school in 2010. In April 2011 a new governing body took over from the interim executive board that had been in place since 2007. The school gained the British Standard Award for Enterprise in April 2011.

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

2

Main findings

The school gives pupils a satisfactory education and has a number of developing strengths. It is improving rapidly because of effective and insightful leadership. Pupils, staff, parents and carers, and the governing body share a pride in the school, recognising that much has changed for the better in recent years. The school has good capacity to continue to improve because its leaders have a clear overview of what needs to be done and how to do it. Since the last inspection, teaching and the tracking of pupils' progress have improved and standards have risen in writing and mathematics. The school is working with sustained determination, and increasing effect, to ensure that all pupils achieve their best.

The attainment of pupils by the time they leave has fluctuated in recent years, but there is an improving trend. As a result, current pupils are reaching standards close to those expected for their age and standards are rising through the school. This is because pupils of all ages are now making more consistent progress in each year group. Many older pupils, and some lower attaining pupils, are making good progress because of determined work to remedy earlier gaps in their learning.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and often good in Key Stage 2. Teaching is carefully planned and it promotes good attitudes to learning. In the best lessons, pupils' ambition is sparked by a sense of pace and purpose. In some lessons, aims are too broad and activities lack a precise focus on the learning required. Teaching and marking do not always pinpoint clearly enough how pupils should improve their work, and errors in writing are often overlooked. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment has increased, but the school has rightly identified that the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to aim high. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and are skilled in helping individuals and groups to overcome difficulties in learning. Pupils enjoy a broad and interesting curriculum that is much enriched by extra activities. As a result, they say that learning is fun.

The school is giving pupils solid foundations in reading and writing through effective teaching about the sounds that make up words. Pupils have regular reading sessions in school, although the support for independent reading is not so well developed, either at home or at school.

This is a happy school where everyone's voice is heard and morale is high. Pupils behave well. They learn to understand themselves and others and they know that their contribution matters to the whole school community. The quality of care is

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good and robust arrangements ensure that pupils are kept safe. The staff show a high level of understanding and concern for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and help them to thrive. Parents and carers are welcomed and communication is open and easy. The efforts of the whole staff team are valued and harnessed effectively for the benefit of pupils, and teamwork is strong across the whole school community.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching through a consistent and precise focus on raising standards by:
 - ensuring clarity in all lessons about the specific learning required
 - identifying, through ongoing feedback and marking, exactly what pupils need to do to improve their work
 - insisting on greater accuracy in pupils' written work
 - extending the challenge of activities, particularly for the most able.
- Further encourage and monitor independent reading at home and at school, to build literacy skills and enjoyment of reading.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start school with skills that are generally in line with those expected at this age. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards by the time they leave that are broadly average. This is evident in the work of pupils currently in Year 6, who have made rapid progress this year. Standards in mathematics are improving because of action taken this year to improve skills in calculation. Pupils are learning effective strategies for working with numbers in their head and on paper. Pupils are gaining confidence and enthusiasm for writing, although the quality of handwriting, spelling and punctuation is very variable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make progress at a similar pace to other pupils. In some cases they make good progress from a low starting point because of sustained support that is closely matched to their needs.

Pupils feel safe and secure at school and their attendance is good. Pupils behave well, responding positively to rules, rewards and sanctions that they see as being fair and helpful. Pupils are well informed about healthy lifestyles. They make thoughtful suggestions about school life. Pupils readily take responsibility, for example in making and selling items in support of a charity they have chosen. Pupils are developing skills that prepare them well for later life. They have increasing skills in literacy and numeracy and they use computers confidently. Enterprise projects have given older pupils a useful introduction to business skills, and they are keenly aware of the importance of teamwork. Pupils' personal development is good. They

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understand their own feelings, develop self-control and relate well to others. They are aware of different faiths and customs, and of values shared by people from diverse backgrounds.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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?

Teaching is planned thoroughly to cover the required curriculum. It engages pupils' interest and holds their attention. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are appropriate in most lessons and sometimes high in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, teaching proceeds at a good pace while staff carefully ensure that pupils' understanding is secure. However, teaching is not always incisive enough in identifying the next steps in learning, pinpointing mistakes and misunderstandings and showing pupils how to improve. The school identifies pupils who are gifted and talented, though it recognises that they are not consistently challenged in lessons and other activities.

The school offers a well-balanced curriculum that includes practical and creative work and scientific investigation alongside an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is adapted well for those with special learning needs so that they participate fully. Music features strongly and the whole school sings together with tuneful enjoyment. Pupils have many opportunities for outdoor learning in the school's well-developed grounds. They take part with enthusiasm in a good range of sports and after-school clubs. Pupils' horizons are expanded by visits and visitors, and by school-wide themes such as the current multicultural focus in which each

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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class is studying a different country. The school works in productive partnership with other local schools to enlarge the scope of opportunities for pupils. The school is in the process of updating its library provision. It is extending the use of home/school reading records, aware of the need for more active encouragement and monitoring of pupils' independent reading.

The school offers good quality care rooted in trusting relationships and the valuing of all pupils, whatever their distinctive needs. Staff routinely go the extra mile to support pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, working with parents and carers to do the best for children. The support and guidance provided nurture calm behaviour, growing confidence and positive attitudes to learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 school's leaders set sights high, and effectively harness the efforts of the whole staff team in working for sustainable improvement. This is seen, for example, in detailed tracking of each child's progress each term which results in rapid action where needed. Careful recruitment of staff and effective monitoring of teaching and learning have improved the quality of teaching and the pace of pupils' progress. Effective leadership in mathematics is developing good practice across the school that is raising standards.

The governing body provides satisfactory support and challenge for the school. It is becoming quickly established and has a clear understanding of its responsibilities. Safeguarding procedures are well developed which include informative guidance for parents and carers and visitors to the school. The school is effective in promoting equality, challenging stereotypes and tackling discrimination so that everyone is accepted and respected. It has a good understanding of the diverse local community and draws people together in working with other community groups. It looks outwards in forging links with people in other places, including communication with children at a school in Kenya.

The school engages well with parents and carers; who are welcomed into school regularly for events and to share in pupils' work. The headteacher and staff are readily accessible to parents and carers and communication is strengthened by an informative website and regular newsletters.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception. They learn sounds to help with reading and start to read simple books. Some begin to write simple sentences, although letter formation is not always well developed. Children enjoy counting and beginning to calculate. They make sensible choices about their activities, relate well to each other and play together amicably, sharing resources. They enjoy healthy drinks and snacks and are helped to think about keeping safe.

The staff know the children well, understand their individual needs and are closely attentive to their welfare. Good use is made of the outdoor areas for activities that often excite interest and foster imagination, as when, equipped with hard hats, fire engine and hose, children rushed to deal with a reported ‘emergency’. Although children enjoy a wide range of activities, not all are resourced and organised to maximise learning. Children are eager to learn and they cooperate well with adults. On occasions, however, they sit and listen without enough active participation.

The headteacher is now providing effective leadership for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The impact of this is beginning to be seen in improvements to provision that are raising achievement. Assessment has become more accurate and is being used, with increasing effect, to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning. This has led, for example, to improvement in boys’ writing. Opportunities for children to initiate activities have been extended, particularly through the enrichment of outdoor learning. Links with parents and carers are good. Great care is taken to ensure children’s safety and well-being, and to meet their individual needs.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are pleased with the school. The view of the vast majority is that teaching is good, the school is led and managed well, children are kept safe, and the school manages behaviour well. The inspection team judged that parents' and carers' faith in the school and its leadership is well founded because of the school's continuing improvement. A few parents and carers have concerns about children's progress and preparation for the next class or school. Inspectors judged that pupils' progress is satisfactory, though not yet consistently good. The school is working effectively to ensure more even progress through the school so that pupils are well prepared for each new stage.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Buxton 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 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	51	20	43	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	33	70	13	28	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	24	51	21	45	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	53	16	34	5	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	53	21	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	21	45	21	45	4	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	45	22	47	4	9	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)	18	38	23	49	5	11	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	40	23	49	4	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	45	23	49	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	53	17	36	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	70	12	26	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	31	66	12	26	3	6	1	2

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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buxton Primary School, Norwich NR10 5EZ

Thank you for welcoming us and telling us about your school. We think that the school gives you a satisfactory education. Your learning is continuing to improve because teachers carefully check the progress you are making and help you to keep up. You are doing better in mathematics because you are learning quick ways to do sums in your head or on paper. Good luck with the times table challenge!

We were pleased to hear that you are proud of your school. You do interesting work, and take part in lots of activities. We especially enjoyed your singing. You behave well and clearly appreciate the many ways in which the headteacher and staff are helping you to succeed. We noticed that you make your own good suggestions about school life, as we saw on the comment tree.

The headteacher and all the staff want you to do as well as possible, and we have discussed ways of helping you to achieve even more. We agree that you need to know more exactly how to improve your work, for example when you spell words wrongly. We think that those of you who learn fast, or have particular talents, would benefit from challenges that take you on further. We have also asked the school to encourage you even more to read widely at home and at school.

We hope that you go on enjoying school, and doing your best in your work.

Yours sincerely

Joy Richardson
Lead inspector

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