

Bushmead Primary School

Bushmead Road, Luton, LU2 7EU

Inspection dates 11–12 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards are rising.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have had an outstanding impact on teaching and learning over the past few years.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds made by letters) have resulted in a sharp rise in the school's results in the national screening for Year 1.
- Teaching is typically good, and is often outstanding. Teachers explain new learning clearly and make sure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise new skills.
- New arrivals to the school, many of whom speak little English, are very well supported and make rapid progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are keen to learn and clearly know how to keep safe.
- Attendance is above average.
- The governing body is well organised and highly effective in carrying out its role.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching and a small amount requires improvement.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to plan their own work and think for themselves.
- Teachers' questioning during lessons does little to increase the level of challenge for pupils.
- Teachers' marking sometimes does little to help pupils improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection a large number of pupils were taking part in school trips. About half of the pupils in Year 6 were on a week’s visit to France and the remainder of Year 6 were out of school for half a day. All pupils in Year 3 were out of school for a day.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 36 lessons. Senior leaders accompanied them during three of these.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils’ books, listened to a number of pupils reading in Years 6, 2 and 1, and held discussions with pupils about their learning and experience of school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of staff and teaching assistants. The lead inspector interviewed the Chair of the Governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including the school’s evaluation of its own effectiveness, safeguarding checks, documentation relating to teachers’ performance and data about pupils’ attainment and progress.
- They took account of the 84 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey, and considered the views of 84 members of staff who completed a questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mike Thompson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynne Thorogood	Additional Inspector
St.John Burkett	Additional Inspector
Nicola Hart	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bushmead is a very large, four-form entry primary school.
- About 40% of pupils are White British. Other pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups.
- Over a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces) is well below the national average.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-ability classes for almost all subjects. For lessons in mathematics, they are grouped according to ability in Years 2 to 6. For teaching of phonics (the sounds made by letters), pupils are grouped according to ability throughout Reception and Year 1.
- In addition to the class teachers, there are specialist teachers for music and physical education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and the school is a National Support School.
- The school is a partner in a newly-established Teaching Schools Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the pace of pupils' progress by eliminating the small amount of teaching that requires improvement and developing consistently outstanding features of teaching in all lessons, ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide opportunities for pupils to think more for themselves and develop skills in planning how they are to tackle and set out their work, and in evaluating what they have done
 - routinely use questioning to increase the level of challenge for pupils
 - make their marking of pupils' work more effective by setting out clearly what pupils need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are below expectations of four year olds at the start of the Reception Year, pupils are making good progress overall as they move through the school. In some classes, progress is outstanding. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is above national expectations.
- This has not always been the case. In recent years, the school has been sharply focused on tackling a legacy of underachievement. This resulted from the poor progress made by pupils in some of the Year 3 and 4 classes in previous years. The impact of this underachievement was evident in the national performance data for the school in 2011 and 2012, which showed that Year 6 pupils had not made enough progress during the course of Key Stage 2.
- The success of the school's actions to improve progress is now evident. Information about the current Year 6, including the results of the most recent national tests, together with observations of pupils' performance in lessons and work in pupils' books, show that, this year, progress throughout Key Stage 2 has been better than last year and attainment is higher.
- Children make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the Reception classes. By the time they move into Key Stage 1, most children are at nationally expected levels in all areas of learning, and a few exceed expectations. The school builds carefully on this good start, and pupils continue to make good or outstanding progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Good progress in reading, writing and mathematics stems from the strong focus placed by the school on ensuring that pupils have many opportunities to practise and develop these skills through lessons in all subjects.
- In almost all instances, pupils read well. Even some of the youngest readers, in Year 1, have developed good strategies, including their good knowledge of phonics, to read with reasonable accuracy. By Year 6, pupils read confidently, fluently and with good expression. They use these skills effectively to help them learn in all subjects.
- Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in writing and, in particular, on accelerating the progress of boys who are reluctant writers. To help achieve this, the boys' writing group in Year 1 provides extra help, carefully tailored to individual needs, by providing opportunities for writing through topics that capture and hold their imagination. Writing about dinosaurs, following imaginative play using models, resulted in the boys producing simple, grammatically correct sentences, with some examples of rich vocabulary such as 'razor sharp claws' to enhance their descriptions.
- Pupils develop their skills in numeracy well. They become good at recognising patterns in numbers and, by Year 6, most have accurate recall of multiplication tables.
- Most pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make at least good progress. In 2012, these pupils made better progress than their classmates in English and mathematics, and their attainment at the end of Year 6 was in line with that of their classmates. This good progress is the result of smaller teaching groups and individual support, where required; for example, in discussion with pupils about their writing and how it could be improved.
- Throughout the school, the learning and progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is closely checked. Teachers use the information gathered to adjust their

planning and to carefully tailor the additional help provided. In most year groups, the rate of progress made by these pupils is close to that of their classmates.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including newcomers to the school, make particularly good progress overall as a result of the extra help provided for them.

The quality of teaching is good

- Parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted online inspection questionnaire felt that their children are taught well. Inspectors agree that this is now the case. The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is invariably good and, in many instances, it is outstanding. Samples of specialist teaching observed in music and physical education were of consistently high quality.
- Teachers are consistently good at capturing and holding pupils' imaginations through well-planned activities, lively introductions to lessons and good use of resources. As a result, pupils sustain good levels of concentration for lengthy periods as they tackle their work. For example, in one of the Reception classes, a teacher skilfully used the incubation of eggs as an opportunity to develop children's speaking skills as well as their understanding of the world around them. As this activity progressed, the children were challenged to use their emerging knowledge of phonics and successfully spelt simple words.
- Teachers are good at using questions to check pupils' understanding of what they have to do, and to help adjust their teaching if necessary. However, they often miss opportunities to increase the level of challenge during lessons through extra questions.
- Lessons are well organised and teachers manage their time effectively so that pupils have enough opportunity to consolidate new learning and develop the skills taught. Pupils' high standards of behaviour and their eagerness to learn contribute strongly to the sense of purpose in all classes.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well in partnership to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The quality of support is good and pupils are given opportunities to work independently. Importantly, pupils of all abilities have equal opportunities to respond to questions in class or group discussions.
- In all of the Reception classes and in some instances in Key Stages 1 and 2, such as in mathematical investigations, teachers are good at challenging pupils to organise their own ways of working and solving problems. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were engrossed in their task of arranging cardboard rectangles (representing hay bales) in a variety of ways to create animal pens of different sizes. This provided excellent challenge as pupils attempted to increase the capacity of the pens while minimising the number of bales used. The teacher expertly guided some of the pupils in exploring the ways in which the outside measurement of the shape can alter while the area enclosed remains the same.
- However, lessons do not always provide opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their learning or to fully use their initiative. This occurs when teachers' planning focuses more on the activities to be tackled than the learning that should be developed.
- The quality of feedback given to pupils through teachers' marking varies considerably. At its best, some examples of marking in writing are thorough and provide clear evaluations of strengths and the improvements required. However, in too many instances, teachers do not give pupils clear enough guidance about the next steps that they need to take in order to improve.

- Opportunities to develop pupils' independence as learners and understanding of how best to improve are missed when pupils are not given opportunities to develop skills in evaluating the quality of their own and other's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding. They are attentive, concentrate well, eagerly answer teachers' questions, and take a keen interest in their work. As a result, lessons are very productive.
- Pupils clearly know the school rules and understand the reasons for them. They also appreciate the way in which the school celebrates good behaviour. School records show that there are very few instances of unacceptable behaviour or bullying of any kind. Pupils say that when these do occur, the school responds quickly, and effectively. The deployment of sports apprentices to help supervise ball games, such as football, at playtime, has helped to ensure that pupils appreciate the importance of playing games according to the rules.
- Pupils are very well informed about avoiding risk or danger, for example when searching the internet or using email.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent. Pupils consistently show courtesy and good manners towards one another and adults.
- Pupils respond well to the strong spiritual, moral, and social guidance they receive. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and embrace new experiences enthusiastically.
- The parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children feel safe. This is because the school provides outstanding pastoral care for its pupils. Parents also value greatly the way in which the school promotes high standards of behaviour, and the quality of education provided. They show this through the support that they give to the school, and by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive punctually.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management are outstanding because of the uncompromising and highly successful drive to improve that is evident in many of the actions taken in recent years. Parents and carers appreciate the improvements made, and commented on these when talking to inspectors. One succinctly summarised these views when commenting, 'I'm very pleased with the school. It keeps going forward and getting better.'
- The school's immediate and robust response to the disappointing results of the Year 1 national phonics screening in 2012 is clear evidence of its ambition. Results were closely analysed, training provided and teaching methods adjusted. As a result, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard doubled in the 2013 test.
- Similar rigour and was demonstrated in responding to underachievement identified in Years 3 and 4 in 2008/9. Staffing arrangements were reviewed, support and training provided, and systems for ensuring the accuracy of teachers' assessments were strengthened. Whole-school formal checks on pupils' progress, through analysis of information and discussions about individuals' achievements were increased from three to six times per year. As a result, rates of progress in Key Stage 2 classes are now good and, in some instances outstanding, and have

been for the past few years.

- Leaders and managers at all levels have extremely high expectations and show clear determination in attempting to improve the school's effectiveness. They know how effective the school is because they regularly check on all aspects of its work. They are rigorous in ensuring that the vast majority of teaching is never less than good and, in many instances, is outstanding. This improvement has been brought about as a result of training and coaching, and through the effective management of teachers' performance. Issues for improvement in teaching resulting from this inspection had already been identified through the school's own monitoring.
- The local authority monitors the effectiveness of the school termly and considers that standards are secure, teaching and learning are good and that the school is in a strong position to share its good practice with other schools. Even though the local authority considers the school to be effective, it treats the school in the same way as all others in terms of access to training opportunities and the school makes good use of these.
- The school is effective in its role as a National Support School by providing expertise and helping to raise standards in other schools. For instance, it helped improve the effectiveness of a local school from inadequate to good through the advice and support it provided.
- The school values the views of each individual and responds extremely well to the needs of all members of its community. For example, it consulted widely before responding positively to requests from members of the local community for halal meat to be available for pupils at lunchtimes. The school is particularly proud of its 'quiet room', originally established as a prayer room in response to requests from members of the Muslim community. The use of this room soon broadened when Christian pupils and those from other religions began to make use of it alongside their Muslim friends.
- The school ensures that pupils have many first-hand learning experiences and offers a wide range of activities, including residential visits, to help enrich pupils' learning. Effective family workers play an important role in supporting a wide range of activities such as the after-school 'mother and daughter maths sessions' designed to improve the confidence and understanding of both pupils and parents.
- Through excellent teamwork and shared values, all members of staff ensure that the school is a calm, welcoming and orderly place in which pupils learn effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is extremely well led. The Chair of the Governing Body plays a strong role in ensuring that it closely monitors the school's effectiveness and provides clear challenge in holding leaders accountable for the school's performance. Governors ensure that the performance of staff is effectively managed and understand the arrangements that link teachers' pay to their performance. Governors have a clear understanding of the way in which pupil premium funding is used and its impact on pupils' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	132246
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	412030

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	743
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Ward
Headteacher	Alex Miller
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2010
Telephone number	01582 725387
Fax number	01582 482337
Email address	bushmead.primary.admin@luton.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

