



Bushmead Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132246
Local Authority LUTON
Inspection number 294002
Inspection date 14 November 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Sims HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bushmead Road
School category	Community		Luton
Age range of pupils	4-11		Bedfordshire LU2 7EU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 725387
Number on roll (school)	655	Fax number	01582 482337
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr I Ward
		Headteacher	Mr A Miller
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bushmead is a large primary school in the northern suburbs of Luton.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also lower than average. There is a higher than average proportion of minority ethnic pupils in the school. Attainment on entry to the school is similar to national expectations.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. It provides excellent care, guidance and support for pupils whose personal development is of the highest order. The curriculum and the leadership of the headteacher are also exceptional.

Pupils' standards are similar to national expectations when they start school. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and most children meet the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average and they are further above by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. Results are improving over time at Key Stage 1 but have slipped back at Key Stage 2 from a peak in 2003. Following the successful drive to raise standards in writing standards have dipped slightly in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and science at Key Stage 2. A larger proportion of pupils at both Key Stages 1 and 2 are now reaching levels higher than those expected for their age.

The personal development of pupils is outstanding both in and out of the classroom. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are excellent. Pupils are especially keen on taking on additional responsibilities and do so with enthusiasm and relish. Teaching and learning are good. Where they are outstanding the school is seeking to spread this practice further to ensure they are more consistent across the school. The curriculum gives pupils a wide range of subjects to study in lessons as well as opportunities for a very extensive list of sports, clubs and other activities.

The school looks after its pupils extremely well both in ensuring they are well cared for and also that they all get the right kind of support. This is achieved by monitoring their progress closely and setting them challenging but achievable targets in their work.

The headteacher and senior managers provide inspirational leadership and are ably supported by a well informed governing body. Almost all positions of subject and aspect coordinators have been filled. A few coordinators are very new to their roles and the school has temporary arrangements in place during its efforts to secure a suitable literacy coordinator.

The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more of the teaching and learning is outstanding by disseminating the good practice that exists to raise standards further especially in Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have progressed very well. An exceptionally high proportion have achieved beyond expected levels.

The most recent assessments have seen improvements in reading and writing, as a result of the school's focus on writing, but a fall in mathematics for a second year running.

In recent years there has been some slippage in results at Key Stage 2. Levels of attainment in English and science have fallen whilst mathematics has remained stable. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels has increased however, again as a result of specific intervention by the school. In English and mathematics the school exceeded its target for higher attaining pupils.

Progress against expected levels still remained very good in mathematics and science in the 2005 test results despite falls in the results themselves. Those who did not reach the expected level at Key Stage 1 made particularly good progress in Key Stage 2. In the most recent tests in 2006 the Key Stage 2 results improved in English and mathematics, but slipped for the third successive year in science. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils, which are almost always met and sometimes exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are a credit to the school. In lessons they have a mature attitude to learning and act as sensible and responsible young people. They are very articulate, polite and well mannered. Their courtesy is exceptional. Pupils clearly enjoy school and are able to say what makes lessons enjoyable, for example, 'Teachers make lessons fun. I like the activities and the experiments in science.' Parents echo this view, 'My child loves coming to school every day. He hates going home.'

Pupils are aware of healthy lifestyles. There is a high take up of the many additional clubs and sporting opportunities on offer and most enjoy school dinners. Pupils get on well together and have very positive relationships with each other and with adults. Whilst they say there is some bullying, this is dealt with appropriately and they felt safe and secure. They confirm a high degree of racial harmony in the school.

Pupils thrive on the responsibilities they are given. They are aware of their new roles on the school council and are able to give an extensive list of other instances where they have jobs to do in and around the school including 'playground pals', helping with lunch and the healthy tuck shop, and welcoming visitors. They respond well to the reward systems which motivate them to do well. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are all equally very strong and backed up by regular daily assemblies and an effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is characterised by very effective classroom management where lessons move at a brisk pace and are carefully planned to take account of the needs of different groups of learners. Open ended or extension activities ensure higher attaining pupils are challenged and the needs of pupils with learning difficulties are met well. Lessons maintain pupils' attention and interest even when they spend too long sitting on the carpet, which they dislike. In almost all cases relationships between pupils and adults are well established. Reward, praise and humour are used well to engage learners and their attitudes to learning are exemplary.

The purposes of the lesson are usually on display and referred to frequently during and at the end of lessons. Teachers are confident at using information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons, particularly the interactive white boards. In most lessons the additional support staff are deployed well and use their time effectively to support learners. At times when the lesson is predominantly teacher-led they are often under-employed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils are able to take part in a wide range of subjects beyond the core skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are now studying French. The extensive physical education and PSHE programmes ensure that pupils know the importance of staying healthy. The school's successful curriculum has been acknowledged in the various awards it has received, for example Activemark, Healthy Schools, Artsmark and the endorsement of its 'Effective Early Learning' programme.

Pupils also benefit from an extensive range of activities and clubs after school including 'funky phonics', gardening, pool, drama, science, cricket and football. Their take up of these extra-curricular activities is high and in addition they have many responsibilities within and beyond the school community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school ensures the safety and protection of pupils at all times and has taken rigorous steps to ensure it meets all statutory requirements. All staff have received appropriate training in child protection procedures and the induction procedures for new staff ensure they too are fully aware of their responsibilities.

The school monitors closely the attainment of pupils and knows which groups or individuals are doing well or not making as much progress as expected. The progress

of individuals and groups is closely monitored. The school is able to identify trends and concerns, for example writing which was previously a concern in Year 4, and put in place appropriate and effective strategies to address them.

Pupils know how well they are doing. Parents confirmed they are also well informed about their children's progress through the information they receive, and meetings and informal discussions with teachers. Pupils are very clear about what next steps they need to take to improve. The school provides effective intervention and support for pupils with learning difficulties as well as for higher attainers. Pupils confirmed they are well supported and challenged.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is backed up by strong and experienced senior managers who operate very much as a team. Leaders place high emphasis on the continuing professional development of staff. More experienced staff are prepared to take on new ideas from less experienced colleagues.

Senior leaders have a very clear knowledge of the strengths and areas for development through the robust monitoring procedures in place. They are supported well by an experienced and knowledgeable governing body that is well informed about how well the school is doing. The school is on a secure financial footing and provides very good value for money. The subject leaders are an enthusiastic team. They represent a mix of experienced and less experienced colleagues.

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Bushmead Primary School, Bushmead Road, Luton. LU2 7BJ

Thank you very much for your warm welcome during my recent visit to your school. I thought you might like to know what I have found out about Bushmead Primary.

You go to a very good school that has many strengths. I was particularly impressed with the way you behave in school and treat each other. In turn the school looks after you very well and makes sure each of you gets the right kind of support. You also have so many opportunities to take part in sport and a wide range of activities in lessons and after school.

I enjoyed speaking to some of you and the way you told me clearly what you liked about the school and what you would like to improve. You enjoy your lessons and the support you get from your teachers and I have asked the school to make sure even more of your lessons are as brilliant as the very best ones.

Many of you already do very well in your tests and your work but this will help you to get even better results.

Thank you once again for making my brief visit such an enjoyable one.

Mark Sims HMI