

# Buxted CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114493
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	311624
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Hutchings

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	95
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gordon Mankelow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Radford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Hurstwood Road Buxted Uckfield TN22 4BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01825 733185
<b>Fax number</b>	01825 733860

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, personal development and well-being, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from: national published assessment data and the school's own records of pupils' attainment, observation of the school at work, discussions with members of staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of the school's documentation and pupils' work, and analysis of the parents' responses to questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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

This village school is smaller than most primary schools. The majority of pupils are White British, with a small number from other ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is below average. The school has recently received Healthy School and International School awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Buxted Primary is a good school where pupils thrive both personally and academically. Parents are very supportive of the school and many commented positively on recent improvements. Changes made to the curriculum by the headteacher have helped to improve pupils' achievements throughout the school. As a result pupils' achievement is good. One parent expressed the views of many in the comment, 'Teachers are very committed to the welfare and education of each child, and give them a strong sense of belonging.' Another comment sums up the school well, 'The school is great.'

Recent improvements in the Foundation Stage have meant that pupils in Year 1 began this academic year meeting the expected goals for their learning in the Reception class. Older pupils began Year 1 with lower levels of achievement. The good progress pupils make from this below average start is shown in the above and increasing significantly above, national average standards reached in the Year 6 tests. Although there is some variation in standards from year to year, because of the small number and differing capabilities of pupils, there has been a steady improvement in the Year 2 tests over the last few years. The current focus on improving pupils' writing skills and handwriting is showing signs of success, although the quality of pupils' writing does not match the standard of their reading, numeracy and science.

The improvements in standards are a direct result of good quality teaching and the revised curriculum. The whole school focus on helping pupils to understand how they learn has been successful and learning is based firmly on first-hand experiences. Pupils say that teachers make learning fun and help them do well by explaining things carefully. They enjoy and learn a lot from their 'learning journeys', which give them good opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in the context of other subjects. The special whole school themed weeks also make a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils appreciate that they have to work hard and understand exactly what is expected of them in lessons. Teachers and pupils value the newly refurbished classrooms. The new laptops and interactive whiteboards are used well to bring learning alive and make it relevant to pupils' experiences. Teachers mark work regularly and give good feedback to pupils on what they have achieved, but sometimes not enough information about how work could be improved further. Whilst older pupils know their targets for the year and their short term targets, but these are not updated regularly enough for them to be clear of their next steps in learning.

Pupils develop into friendly, confident young people with a good awareness of the environment and how to be fit and healthy. They feel safe and secure because they trust adults to help sort out problems when they occur. Pupils have high expectations of how they should be treated by others, but recognise that sometimes they do not know how to deal with one another well enough to avoid falling out. They are taking responsibility for this in a number of ways. For example, the school council has helped to reorganise the use of the playground so that football games do not disrupt the enjoyment of others. Additionally, the school has introduced a new programme of personal and social education to develop strong relationships amongst the school community further and raise pupils' self-esteem. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to act as class monitors or to 'buddy' younger children or newly arrived pupils.

This is a school where pupils know that their views are listened to and opinions valued by adults. The school council is extremely proud of the contribution pupils made to the creation of the new garden. This project was a valuable opportunity to involve parents and the village community

and pupils now enjoy seeing their efforts rewarded, particularly when vegetables are used in food technology lessons. The school is successfully meeting its aim of encouraging the development of a Christian ethos and values. Pupils talk very enthusiastically about their enjoyment of the clubs they attend, and the range they have to choose from is very broad for the size of the school.

Good leadership and management have been the key to the improvements in the school. The headteacher and staff have evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses exceptionally well and decided on the most appropriate actions that will have the greatest impact on standards. The morale of staff is high and there is a very strong sense of teamwork and common purpose across the school. Staff have high expectations and the school has developed the confidence to set very challenging targets for its future performance in the knowledge that staff know exactly what has to be done to achieve them. They are keen to develop their practice further and use external expertise well to support them in their work. Good links with the community and other schools enhance opportunities for pupils, such as the project for Year 6 pupils to build a kit car to prepare for their future education. Parents particularly value their increasing involvement in the school, as one parent said, 'I welcome the introduction of the sharing assemblies as it allows parents to become more involved in school life.'

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. While many pupils enter with skills typical for their age, some pupils have lower than expected language and personal and emotional development. Children make good progress so that most of them achieve the expected goals for their learning and some exceed them. They have good opportunities to learn through play and to explore and learn from the world around them. Close checks are made on individual progress and the information is used well to plan interesting and creative activities to meet children's differing needs. The environment is stimulating and staff make learning fun. Adults encourage children well through dialogue with them and help them to develop the early skills of independent learning.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the quality of pupils' writing to match the standards they reach in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that marking and target setting help pupils to know exactly what they have to do to improve their work.

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## Annex A

## 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
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### 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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

21 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Buxted CE Primary School, Uckfield, TN22 4BB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited recently. It was good to hear about the interesting things you do in school. I particularly enjoyed seeing the new garden and hearing about how you take care of it.

I agree with you that Buxted is a good school.

- You find learning fun and I could see how hard you work when the headteacher and I made a short visit to your classrooms.
- The youngest pupils have settled well and are learning many new things, such as following directions to find Spencer Bear.
- You make good progress because you are taught well.
- Most of you reach higher standards than other pupils of your age.
- You attend a very wide range of clubs and many of these help to keep you fit.
- Adults take very good care of you and you say that they help to sort out problems, for example, when someone says something hurtful.
- The school council does a good job to help to make the school an even better place.
- The headteacher and the staff think very carefully about how well the school is doing and take action quickly if they think something needs improving.

I agree with your teachers about the most important things they need to do next.

- Find even more ways to help you to make your writing better.
- Always point out how to make your work better when they mark your work and bring your targets up to date more often.

You can help by making your writing as interesting and neat as possible, and by talking to your teachers about the things you find most difficult when you agree your targets.

Please thank your parents for returning their questionnaires. I enjoyed reading their comments. I wish everyone at Buxted Primary School every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen Hutchings Lead inspector