

Buxton School

Terling Close, London E11 3NT

Inspection dates

14 and 21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have maintained the good standard of education since the last inspection. Governors have held leaders to account well. This has ensured that pupils' experience in school does not suffer, despite staffing changes and the major building works.
- Leaders have a precise and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Remaining variability in teaching, learning and assessment quality is quickly reducing.
- Pupils across the school make good progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in the secondary phase is less strong than in the primary phase though.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive bespoke support in specialist sessions and through mainstream lessons. This supports their academic and personal development well.
- Children in the early years make good progress in a safe, welcoming and effective learning environment. Leaders have ensured that children in Nursery and Reception learn, develop and enjoy themselves at school.
- Pupils attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils value their education and the few with weaker attendance are well supported to improve quickly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because they know the rules, follow instructions from staff promptly and want to learn.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education and for life in modern Britain. Leaders have thought carefully about how best to support pupils' transition between key stages and have ensured that pupils receive tailored post-16 options, advice and guidance.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have protocols and risk assessments in place that help protect pupils from emerging risks and particularly during this building work period. Leaders' attention to detail reflects a secure culture of safeguarding.
- The range of popular curriculum enrichment activities that the school offers very well supports pupils' personal development.
- Pupils typically receive useful feedback, in line with the school's policy, that supports good progress. However, in some cases this is less effective and so sometimes pupils are unclear about how to improve.
- The curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced. Primary and secondary leaders of English work effectively together to prepare for and build on pupils' skills and knowledge precisely. However, this sort of collaboration is not as systematic in other subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - ensuring that pupils are provided with consistently helpful feedback on their work, in line with the school's policy
 - ensuring that teachers in the secondary phase plan activities that effectively build on the strong progress made by disadvantaged pupils in the primary phase.
- Leaders across the primary and secondary phases should work more closely together to ensure that the curriculum across key stages precisely anticipates and builds on pupils' knowledge and skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are highly ambitious and motivated by the principle that each pupil deserves a high-quality education and opportunities to experience new concepts and ideas. Recent staffing challenges have hindered the rate of improvement in teaching, learning and assessment that leaders had expected since the last inspection. However, leaders are maintaining the trend of improvement in pupils' outcomes and progress since 2013, despite a dip at key stage 4 last year.
- Leaders have developed a highly effective system of professional development so that teachers and leaders receive targeted support for their areas of development. The school's effective assessment system informs teachers' performance reviews. This holds teachers firmly to account for pupils' progress. Newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school quickly learn leaders' expectations. New staff are helping to reduce past variability in teaching and learning that meant some pupils' progress was weak, particularly in GCSE mathematics.
- Leaders seek and welcome external challenge and support including from the local authority and other local schools. Consequently, leaders' plans for development are precise and leaders are held to account very effectively for the impact of their work.
- Leaders and governors closely monitor use and effect of additional funding. Pupil premium funding supports a variety of strategies to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have equal access to the opportunities available and additional support. Catch-up funding is very effective at helping pupils in Year 7 quickly improve their reading and numeracy. In the primary phase, additional sports funding supports sustainable strategies that develop pupils' physical health and skills.
- Pupils are very well prepared to take an active role in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to participate in enrichment activities and make a difference to their school and wider communities. Buxton voices, the school's student council, plays an important role in the leadership of the school by providing pupils with a chance to shape their education and participate in the democratic process.
- The curriculum is accessible to the diverse range of pupils that attend the school. Leaders guide pupils' GCSE option choices based on pupils' abilities and informed decisions regarding their aspirations. Increasingly, subject leaders are working together to ensure that their curriculum plans precisely align between the primary and secondary phases so that skills and knowledge development is even better. This is currently routine within English and more inconsistent in other subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors are a skilled and demanding group who expect the best for the school's pupils, right from the beginning of a pupil's time in the school. They know the school well and understand the challenges faced. However, governors are not complacent and challenge leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve, particularly in ensuring that groups of pupils who are at risk of falling behind their peers catch up.

- Governors' scrutiny of the effects of leaders' strategies is very good. Governors hold high expectations for all aspects of the school's work and take their statutory responsibilities seriously. Governors' understanding of the risks associated with pupils' welfare is secure and governors take advantage of training that further refines their ability to perform their role.
- Governors share leaders' commitment to equality of opportunity and support leaders' work to develop a curriculum that achieves this aim. Pupils reported to inspectors that everyone is equal. For example, some said, 'It does not matter who you are, you are welcome here.' This is evidence of governance having a tangible effect on pupils' day-to-day experience of school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils like coming to school because they consider it a safe and welcoming learning environment where bullying is rare. Pupils know they can talk to a trusted adult about any concerns. The school is active in safeguarding pupils' welfare both inside and outside of school. Close and effective work with external agencies helps keep pupils safe and supports their additional needs. The majority of parents, pupils and staff who responded to the Ofsted's surveys agreed that this is a safe and caring school. Leaders have taken particular care to manage the heightened potential risks associated with the building work so that staff and pupils can continue to work in a safe environment. This includes adding additional staff to supervise social times, particularly in parts of the school where movement is more restricted.
- Leaders have ensured that staff are knowledgeable about risks that could affect pupils' well-being. This includes an excellent understanding of the link between holiday times and potential risks. Staff also understand the emerging risks associated with mobile devices and online, and in the school's fulfilment of the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders have ensured that the staff are suitable to work with children and that all records are accurate and precise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils throughout this all-through school can expect and do receive teaching and learning that understands and plans for their needs. This is most effective in supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and lower ability to make strong progress from their starting points. Pupils who join the school in the early stages of English language acquisition are well supported to access the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils' needs are well understood and effectively met, particularly in the early years and primary phases. In the secondary phase, teachers are less consistent at getting the most out of disadvantaged pupils because at times the activities planned do not effectively build on their prior learning.
- English, and in particular writing, is very effectively taught across the school. Pupils' understanding of language, meaning and inference is strong and used to support their

development across the curriculum. Literacy is a whole-school focus and effectively enhanced by teachers across the school.

- Teaching assistants play an effective role in pupils' learning, particularly those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants work well with teachers to ensure that the additional support aligns to the learning aims and boosts pupils' understanding.
- Teachers ask probing questions and use their subject knowledge to challenge pupils to think through concepts carefully. Links are made that might otherwise be missed and pupils were observed enjoying the process of discovery in their learning across phases.
- Pupils value their learning and are prompt to lessons. They are prepared to learn and eager to succeed across year groups. Little disruption to learning occurs and where it does this is linked to teachers being less adept at matching activities to some pupils' needs.
- Teachers provide pupils with feedback on their work that is typically in line with the school's policy and expectations. Sometimes this feedback is less effective at identifying how pupils can improve their progress. Leaders have identified this remaining variability and are resolving it as a priority.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders have developed an effective programme of enrichment activities, trips and visits that supports pupils' personal development alongside their academic progress.
- Trips and visits align to the curriculum and staff evaluate them to ensure that those experiences are worthwhile. Leaders closely monitor who attends clubs and activities so that pupils from all backgrounds have a chance to benefit.
- The school's information and pupils' comments to inspectors support the view that bullying is rare and derogatory or prejudiced-based insults are very uncommon. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors about the community spirit within the school that celebrates diversity and encourages respect and tolerance for all. Positive relationships between staff and pupils further support this aspect of pupils' welfare.
- Pupils' physical and mental well-being is supported throughout the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. Vulnerable pupils and those who have additional needs are supported to minimise barriers to their development. Consequently, pupils' self-confidence builds and their resilience to challenges is improved.
- Pupils are very aware of the risks associated with their local environment and when online. The school's programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, called 'Plant you', provides regular chances for pupils to learn about how to stay safe and make sensible decisions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils' attendance to school has been better than the national averages for primary and secondary schools over the past three years and continues to be strong. The few pupils who have higher than average absence are well supported to get into school and overcome the barriers that prevent regular attendance.
- Pupils' conduct throughout a typical school day is good. Some pupils require additional support to ensure that their conduct does not fall below standard. Pupils come to school wanting to learn and the vast majority are good at self-regulating.
- Heightened expectations and staff consistency in reporting concerns have resulted in a rise in the number of fixed-term exclusions recently. However, the number is still lower than historic averages and the sanctions are appropriate. Pastoral leaders closely monitor pupils' behaviour so that trends can be identified and future problems avoided.
- The school has developed a range of alternatives to exclusion so that pupils' behaviour is supported wherever possible. The internal exclusion room is a very effective space where pupils have time to reflect on their actions and continue to learn. Pupils who use alternative provision are well monitored and typically go onto similar 16 to 19 study programmes as their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points across key stages and subjects, and in the early years.
- Over time, pupils in key stage 4 have made better than average progress but last year there was a dip. Disadvantaged pupils did less well than in previous years. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are doing better but still not as well in the secondary phase as in the primary phase.
- Pupils made average progress in key stage 2 last year, with attainment in key stages 1 and 2 being broadly in line with other primary schools nationally. Pupils' writing has been a consistent area of strength while pupils' reading and mathematics is improving over time from low starting points.
- Pupils throughout the early years and into Year 1 make very strong progress in their development of language through phonics. This is a strength of the school and sets up pupils well for their subsequent development in literacy and the wider curriculum.
- Across the school, pupils' progress is tracked against aspirational targets. Middle leaders and teachers use assessment information effectively so that pupils make good progress throughout their time in school through lessons and interventions.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The resourced provision is expert at developing pupils' academic and personal development so that pupils spend most time in mainstream lessons and do well.
- The most able in the primary phase attain well by the end of key stage 1, with a higher-than-average proportion achieving greater depth in the reading, writing and mathematics last year. The most able in the secondary phase make good progress due to effective challenge and questioning by teachers.
- Pupils' preparation for the next stages in their education, training or employment is a strength of the school. Pupils make smooth transitions from Reception into Year 1 and

then through the primary phase. Most pupils continue into Buxton's Year 7 where they continue to make good progress because of the close work between the key stage leaders. Pupils in the secondary phase are then provided with effective advice and guidance so that they choose appropriate GCSEs and at the end of Year 11, move onto suitable 16 to 19 study programmes.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership in the early years is strong and is resulting in the year-on-year increases in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the key stage.
- The school's achievement information and records of current children's learning in their 'special books' show that they make good progress from typically low starting points. This is because the learning opportunities provided are interesting and well matched to the children's needs. For example, in the Nursery classes children were excited when learning about baby chicks.
- Adults are adept at using comparative language in their questioning to check and consolidate the children's understanding. Adults' good questioning, appropriate observations and the detailed evaluations of what children can do, is contributing to accurate assessments for each child in their care.
- The curriculum develops basic reading, writing and number skills well. Through a consistent approach to teaching accurate letter formation, children quickly develop good handwriting.
- Children receive high-quality phonics teaching and are well prepared to share books, sound out words and use their phonics knowledge to start to support their spelling and writing. Children demonstrate curiosity and interest when listening to adults and learn quickly.
- Leaders use additional funding effectively in supporting the progress and attainment of the disadvantaged and children who have SEN and/or disabilities. These children benefit from high-quality teaching support and make at least as much good progress from their starting points as their peers.
- The classrooms are safe and very well organised. Stimulating activities, in the inviting classrooms and outdoor environments, engage children and sustain their interest well, promoting the good behaviour seen. Home visits, visits to the local private nursey, and the school's 'stay and play sessions' help children to settle quickly when they join the school.
- Children learn important personal, social and emotional skills effectively so that they are very well prepared for their move into Year 1. This enables them to share and take turns when they play together and to discuss their ideas in pairs, groups, and with their class. Children in the Nursery, and in the Reception classes, interact exceptionally well with each other.

School details

Unique reference number	103080
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10031831

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Williams
Headteacher	Kath Wheeler
Telephone number	020 85343425
Website	www.buxtonschool.org.uk
Email address	office@buxtonschool.waltham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This all-through school has 1,400 pupils in the primary and secondary phases with 57 in the early years. The school has an on-site resourced provision for pupils who have speech, language and communication needs. The school currently has a small number of pupils at the local authority's pupil referral unit.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged. A higher than average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities, many of whom have education, health and care plans.
- A large number of pupils join the school mid-year and many arrive speaking English as an additional language.
- At the time of this inspection, the school's new building was in the final building stages.

- There is no sixth-form provision currently operating. The oldest pupils are in Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and scrutinised pupils' work in 64 visits to lessons, including sessions in the Nursery and Reception. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work outside of lessons.
- Inspectors met with staff, pupils, leaders and governors. The inspectors spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority and with two parents. Inspectors also held informal conversations with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils during social times, visited the special educational needs resourced provision and the internal isolation room.
- Inspectors took account of the views of the 26 parents, 42 staff and 195 pupils who provided feedback via the appropriate Ofsted surveys.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation regarding the school's work, including policies, practices and evaluations. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's single central record of pre-employment checks on staff.

Inspection team

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Tim Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Helena Mills, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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