

Barling Magna Community Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Unique reference number | 114830 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 378934 |
| Inspection dates | 8–9 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Miranda Perry |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 157 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Hilary Hall |
| Headteacher | Marion Still |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 February 2009 |
| School address | Little Wakering Road Southend-on-Sea SS3 0LN |
| Telephone number | 01702 218961 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Miranda Perry

Additional Inspector

Paul Burton

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twenty lessons or part lessons were observed, amounting to about seven hours in total. Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff. Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including the school's documents for self-evaluation and safeguarding and the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at pupils' work and the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress. Inspectors considered responses to the 81 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those completed by pupils.

Information about the school

Barling Magna is smaller than the average-sized primary school. In Key Stage 2, pupils are taught in mixed-age groups. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has received the Quality Mark for extended services. The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. Barling Magna School is part of the Rochford District Schools Partnership Trust.

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 | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because pupils' achievement has not fully recovered from a dip in progress, particularly in literacy, since the last inspection, and there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although there are examples of current good progress in the school, particularly in mathematics. However, pupils do not always get the opportunity to develop their skills in literacy across the curriculum and so improvements in pupils' reading and writing have not been consistent. The school is successful in eliminating gaps in learning for groups of pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils benefit from positive relationships with their teachers. Pupils enjoy learning when the themes of lessons excite and engage them, for example as a result of the creative opportunities offered by the curriculum. These contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils do not experience enough lessons where learning objectives and targets are focused on the next steps they need to take to make good progress. As a result, pupils are not always clear how well they are doing, and how to do better.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning, and their conduct in lessons and around the school is impressive. They act safely, and are polite and courteous. Pupils with particular needs have made marked improvements in their behaviour over time, because behaviour is managed very well by the school.
- Leaders and managers have been successful in improving any weak teaching, so that teaching is always at least satisfactory. They have implemented strategies which have tackled underachievement, although the impact of these is not evident in all lessons.

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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?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so that pupils make good progress by July 2013 by:
 - using information from whole-school tracking as the focus for lesson planning and lesson objectives
 - setting individual targets for pupils
 - helping pupils to understand the next steps in their learning and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the pupils' literacy skills so that pupils make good progress in reading and writing by July 2013 by:
 - developing a whole-school literacy strategy that consolidates areas of current good practice
 - making provision for pupils to develop their skills in literacy across the curriculum
 - ensuring pupils consistently apply their knowledge of phonics in a breadth of contexts.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' current attainment is around one term ahead of the national average. Parents, carers and pupils are happy with the progress pupils are making. Pupils' progress has improved over the last year and is now satisfactory overall. In some classes, for example in Year 6, pupils are making good progress. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils made good progress because the teacher's questions challenged them to consider which parts of a mathematics examination question they could already answer, and which parts they would have to work out. When teaching is not focused on specific targets to improve, pupils do less well. For example, a pupil in Key Stage 2 was very proud of an extended piece of non-fiction he was working on. However, he was not provided with specific guidance on how to improve it, and was unable to say what was good about it and how he could make it better.

Interventions to support pupils on the borderline of a National Curriculum level have been successful and have helped the school recover from a dip in progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 find these support sessions helpful.

Children enter Reception with knowledge, skills and abilities slightly below national expectations for their age. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 overall.

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Reception children are currently making good progress because they are engaged and inspired by their lessons. During a spelling bingo game, Reception children were delighted when they sounded out their bingo words accurately, quicker than their peers.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is largely because the school understands and caters for these pupils' individual learning needs well. For example, pupils who struggle with their speech and language make accelerated progress in communication as result of effective home-school liaison, and support from outside specialists, with whom the school has a very good working relationship.

Attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 is average. In a class for pupils in Years 4 and 5, a group of pupils were enthusiastic about analysing a text in their guided reading session. However, their progress in reading is not consistent, because opportunities to apply their skills in reading are often missed. For example, in lessons when complex key words are used, pupils are not always given the opportunity to read and understand them.

Quality of teaching

Although parents and carers believe that their children are taught well at the school, the inspection findings indicate that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There are, nevertheless, instances of good teaching. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 responded to the high expectations of their teacher and corrected their punctuation so all their capital letters were accurate. Reception children learnt well from their outside environment when they painted a blue tit they had just seen fly into their bird house. Teachers encouraged them to reflect on colours and consider how nature made them feel. 'Black will only work for the wings,' said one Reception girl to her peer, 'and the blue is lovely.'

The majority of teaching is no better than satisfactory because the lesson planning does not consistently focus on what progress individual pupils need to make. As a result, in some classes for combined year groups, lessons do not cater for the pupils' breadth of ability, and pupils are not clear at what level they should be working.

Basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are not taught consistently well across the curriculum. For example, inaccuracies in the spelling of key words are addressed in science books, but in other subjects basic grammatical and spelling errors are not challenged. In stand-alone phonics sessions, pupils generally acquire skills well, because of exciting resources. In a Reception phonics session, children could not wait to see what was in the shiny 'ow' box. However, pupils are not always able to apply their phonics' skills in different contexts, and overcome barriers to developing literacy.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn well. They benefit from plans that correctly identify obstacles to their learning, and strategies

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which support them to overcome these obstacles through developing their independence.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think there is a good standard of behaviour at the school. Pupils appreciate how effectively the school manages behaviour, particularly for those pupils who have behavioural difficulties. One parent commented that the school had taught her child what good behaviour means, and how to stick at it. During the inspection, the school had a visit from an organisation raising awareness of the 2012 Olympics. Every single pupil behaved in a way which left the organisation with an extremely positive opinion of the school.

Pupils concentrate well in class, and adhere strictly to routines which allow lessons to flow smoothly. Pupils say that bullying does not happen very often, and if it does, the school deals with it well. They think that the strategy of having a 'worry box' in each class is a good one. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a particularly good understanding of different types of bullying, such as mobile phone bullying, and how they can support younger pupils to prevent it.

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said that their children feel safe at Barling Magna. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, especially when it comes to new technology. Their attendance is consistently above average.

Leadership and management

Leaders have tackled the weaknesses that were preventing pupils from making satisfactory progress by providing, among other things, professional development opportunities that have been effective in improving the practice of staff so their teaching is never less than satisfactory.

Issues that led to a dip in the rate of progress have been addressed and there are now examples of current good progress. They have tracked pupils' progress so that pupils with gaps in their learning have been identified and successful interventions made. In these ways leaders and managers demonstrate a capacity to sustain improvement

Senior and middle leaders have put into place strategies to improve the quality of pupils' reading and writing. These have not yet been embedded to ensure pupils receive consistently good support in developing their literacy skills across the curriculum and the key stages.

The governing body is closely involved in leadership and management and ensures that arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. The Chair of the Governing Body always makes sure the governors prioritise pupils' achievement in

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any decisions that they make. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily because staff have become much more aware of the progress of individual pupils and are providing support for pupils to catch up when they see there are gaps in learning.

Discrimination is not tolerated by Barling Magna, which is a cohesive community where girls and boys get on noticeably well with each other. The diversity of the curriculum and the good extra-curricular provision contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils cite extra-curricular activities as some of their favourite things at school, and members of the orchestra say they love their trips out to perform. The pupils have positive impressions of their visit to a Hindu temple, and some pupils in Year 6 said, 'We are the kind of school that welcomes visitors and new people.' Pupils are particularly engaged when themes have been chosen to meet their particular interests.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards: | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



10 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barling Magna Community Primary School, Southend-on-Sea, SS3 0LN

My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed our two days inspecting your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. Your enthusiasm, friendliness and good behaviour impressed us a lot. Some of you told us that your school feels like one big family, where pupils and staff are friendly and pupils look out for each other, and we think that this is true.

You go to a satisfactory school and make satisfactory progress in lessons, and there are some good features to your learning. You and your teachers and learning assistants get on well with each other. You try hard to do what the teachers tell you, and follow the school's routines well. We do not think your teachers always focus on the things you need to do to get better. Some of you said to us in lessons that you were not sure how to do what you were asked, and how well you were doing.

In some lessons, we saw you you read and write really well. In other lessons, you found it difficult to understand key words, and practise your reading skills.

We have asked your headteacher and governors to help you make more progress. To do this, we have asked your teachers to focus in lessons on what you need to do improve, and make sure your targets help you to do this. We have asked your headteacher to make sure you are given the opportunity to practise your reading and writing skills in other lessons as well as in your literacy lessons. You can help by continuing to behave well for learning and asking teachers what your next steps are to improve.

Yours sincerely

Miranda Perry
Lead inspector

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