

Barnwell Primary School

Whitefield Estate, Penshaw, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 7RT

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school motto 'learning together and having fun' is alive in lessons and around the school. Parents, pupils, teachers and leaders place learning at the heart of school life, and ensure that school is a fun place to be.
- Pupils achieve well at school. They make good progress from their starting points. Their attainment by the time they leave school is above the national average due, in part, to outstanding provision in Year 6.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress because of the high quality environment and imaginative approach of the teachers.
- The quality of teaching is good. Some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons. Marking helps pupils understand what they need to do to make their work even better.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the learning and achievement of pupils.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe. Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They are courteous to each other and other adults. Their attitudes to learning help them to achieve well.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body work together well to secure improvements in all areas of school life. They are good role models for staff and pupils.
- Leaders ensure that teachers perform well and focus on the achievement of pupils in their care. They also make regular checks on the quality of the curriculum. As a result, teaching and achievement are rapidly improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are some minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching including in the use of questioning, the provision of opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and the setting of challenging work for more-able pupils in mathematics.
- There is insufficient focus on the progress of different groups of pupils during lesson observations and some strategies to improve achievement have not had time to take full effect.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school’s improvement plan; the school’s own evaluation of its work; the school’s data for tracking pupils’ progress; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school’s documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons and listened to pupils read. They observed assembly, playtime, parts of lessons and small group work.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted joint observations with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed leaders reporting back to teachers on the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement in lessons.
- The inspectors met some parents informally at the start and end of the school day and took into account the responses to the school’s own surveys. There were 34 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account responses from the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Michael Wardle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Sergison

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly above average-sized primary school.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- In 2012, the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the time of the previous inspection the school has appointed a new deputy headteacher.
- The school has achieved the following awards: Investors in People (Gold Standard); Basic Skills Quality Mark; Quality in Study Support; and the Becta ICT Mark.
- The school manages 'Footsteps' which provides registered childcare. This takes the form of a day-care facility for children up to three years old. The school also provides out-of-hours learning before- and after-school for older pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that all pupils make outstanding, rather than good progress by:
 - ensuring that the work set is at the correct level of difficulty for all ability groups, especially for those that are of higher ability in mathematics lessons
 - making sure that pupils are given more opportunities to think for themselves and to work independently
 - developing the skills of some teachers, so that the way they question pupils and the pace of learning are always as good as the very best seen in school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the focus on the progress of groups of pupils with particular learning needs during lesson observations
 - ensuring that the initiatives taken to improve teaching in school are having a long-term impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils is good and improving. Almost all parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire rightly regard their children as making good progress and lesson observations during the inspection confirm this. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Although pupils' progress has improved well, some minor inconsistencies remain and because of this pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding.
- Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those typically found in children of their age. Specifically, their speaking and listening skills, and their numeracy skills are below that which is typical. They make gains in their learning and they catch up well so that they are well prepared to start Year 1. They make good progress overall due to the well-structured and exciting approaches in both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils continue to make gains at Key Stage 1 and reach standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors observed imaginative approaches in classrooms which engaged the pupils and helped them make good progress. For example, in Year 1 where pupils were learning about the Great Fire of London, the variety of activities on offer, together with expert guidance from the teacher, led to good learning.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 2, but accelerates in Year 6, where both teaching and progress are outstanding. As a result of this, pupils' attainment was above the national average in English and mathematics in 2012.
- The progress of all groups of pupils is good. Those pupils with special educational needs performed well when compared to their peers. The performance of more-able pupils improved in 2012, and these pupils made very good progress in reading and writing. The levels of attainment in mathematics reached by more-able pupils were less striking.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium is good when compared with similar pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and make good progress.
- Pupils show a good interest in reading. Younger pupils are taught to understand and apply the rules which link sounds to letters, and they develop well as readers. By the time pupils reach Year 6 many read fluently and understand what they are reading. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils completed a complex analysis of the structure of text when reading '*A Christmas Carol*', and were making rapid progress in their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good. Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and some outstanding practice was seen.
- Teachers plan lessons well, and have high expectations for the pupils. Classrooms are often buzzing with interest, and relationships are excellent. Teachers care for the pupils, and use warmth and humour to create a positive climate. As a result, pupils are happy to participate, and feel safe to speak out. This climate ensures that those with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and are enabled to make good progress.
- In the very best of lessons, teachers expertly tailor activities to the needs of the pupils. In these lessons questioning is precise. Pupils learn rapidly because they are very interested in the subject matter. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson pupils were excited to identify number patterns and picked up the concept 'like lightning' and were keen to tackle more difficult work prepared for them by the teacher.
- Not all lessons are quite as good as this and occasionally the pace of learning slows. This is because some activities do not always encourage pupils to think deeply about what they are learning, or to work things out by themselves. This is particularly the case for some mathematics teaching, where fewer opportunities for independence are given and the work set is not always

challenging enough for more-able pupils.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is also good. The teaching of phonics (the links between sounds and letters) is particularly strong. In one lesson, the teacher was using robot moves to help children work out the relationship of sounds within words. This was thoroughly enjoyed by the children who progressed well during the session.
- Teaching assistants are committed and very well deployed in school. They make a good contribution to learning, and are keen to have a positive impact. They make a particularly good contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
- Marking is helpful and shows pupils how to improve. Pupils often respond well to teachers' comments by reflecting upon them, and by putting the advice into practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In lessons pupils behave well and show a high level of interest in their work. They respond well to teachers, and cooperate well with each other. They persevere well with more complex tasks. In Nursery and Reception, children learn well to take turns and to treat each other kindly. Throughout the school pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and are often given the opportunity to reflect upon their friendships, opinions, behaviour and beliefs.
- Typically, pupils are polite, courteous, get on well with each other and show respect and kindness to others regardless of age, race and disability. They enjoy school life and are proud of their school. As a result, the school rarely excludes pupils.
- Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that behaviour is good in lessons and around school. At playtime 'Barnwell Buddies' ensure that younger pupils are safe and have someone to spend time with. Sometimes behaviour can be a little lively outside of the classroom.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and say they feel very safe in school. They also have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, about which they have few concerns. They know that any incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively by the school. Where there is any unkind behaviour, for example name-calling, pupils say this is dealt with promptly by adults.
- The school has worked hard to promote good attendance and punctuality to school. One strategy, involving classes being awarded the trophy of an attendance character 'Spike', has been particularly successful. As a result, attendance is above average and continues to improve.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have vision, energy and determination to make their school the very best. They have correctly focused on improving the quality of teaching throughout the school, and as a result, achievement has improved. They have created a 'can-do' culture which has full 'buy-in' from staff at all levels in the school. They are excellent role models for other leaders in school to learn from.
- Procedures to judge the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress of pupils are strong. As a result, the extent to which the school knows its strengths and weaknesses is good. Leaders and managers use information about the progress of groups of pupils very well to plan small group work and curriculum changes. However, leaders do not always look specifically at the progress of groups of pupils with different learning needs when completing lesson observations.
- Senior leaders have implemented a range of highly imaginative and successful initiatives designed to improve areas of relative weakness. For example, Key Instant Recall Facts, are in place for all pupils as part of their learning. The development of these 'non negotiable' areas of learning is starting to accelerate pupils' progress because teachers' know exactly where to start new topics from when pupils move up to the next year group. However, it is too early to judge the full impact of some of these new strategies on teaching and ultimately pupils' achievement.

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is also good, and has led to the development of a rich and interesting range of activities, which motivate children and help them learn.
- Senior leaders manage teachers' performance well. As a result, teachers currently at school meet the Teachers' Standards comfortably.
- The range of learning opportunities is rich and varied and supports the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed through different subjects and themes. The curriculum is continually developing and improving because leaders and managers frequently check to see that it is supporting good achievement.
- The school offers a range of extra activities before and after school which widens the experience of the pupils. These include arts, crafts, sports and podcasting. 'Little Dribblers' for the very youngest to develop their football skills is particularly well attended.
- The school works well with parents and carers to support pupils' learning. Most parents are happy with the leadership of the school and agree that the school keeps their children safe. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided light touch support to the school and this good school has been able to develop well with minimal external support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is good. Governors play a vital role in supporting senior leaders in challenging underperformance through the performance management and appraisal process. They have supported the headteacher well when dealing with complex issues including helping with the appointment of key staff.
 - They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement for the school, and of pupil progress, including the progress made by pupils with special educational needs, and those that are eligible for the pupil premium. Therefore, they are able to play a central role in helping the school to move forward.

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	108809
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	401014

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Mrs A Shale
Headteacher	Mrs J Foster
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2010
Telephone number	0191 5536578
Fax number	0191 5536579
Email address	barnwell.primary@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

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