

Barlow Hall Primary School

Darley Avenue, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 7JG

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Teaching is good, with some outstanding practice. Effective teaching has brought about on-going improvements in pupils' achievement since the time of the school's previous inspection.
- The school provides well for pupils who speak English as an additional language, pupils who have special educational needs, including those in the school's additional places for pupils with autism or language difficulties, and pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding. This enables the pupils in all of these groups to make good progress.
- Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds learn together happily. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, they attend regularly and they feel very safe and secure in school.
- The headteacher is an inspirational leader. She is ably supported by a strong leadership team, by all of the staff and by knowledgeable and effective governors.
- Leaders keep a very systematic check on the impact and quality of teaching to ensure that pupils' needs are met well. This is driving improvements forward vigorously and helping pupils to achieve increasingly well.
- Children make a good start to their education in the very well led Early Years Foundation Stage.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the overall quality of teaching is good, it is not yet consistently outstanding. This is the main reason why pupils' achievement across the school is also good, rather than outstanding.
- A very small proportion of teaching still requires improvement. Leaders have already identified these areas of relative weakness and are actively addressing them, but there has not been time for their work to achieve its full effect.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons. They also made a number of short visits to lessons. They listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and they observed the teaching of letters and sounds in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1.
- Meetings were held with three members of the governing body, with staff, with groups of pupils and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed information from 23 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and they also met with a group of parents to hear their views about the school.
- They took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they completed.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance records and the school's own data on pupils' current progress.

Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Prydwen Elfed-Owens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Around a third of pupils are from White British backgrounds and nearly two thirds have English as their home language. Other languages spoken at home by pupils include Arabic, Urdu and Somali, with a further eight home languages, including some Eastern and Western European languages also represented.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual transition points is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is also well above average.
- The local authority provides seven additional places at the school for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders or who have specific speech and language difficulties (known in school as the resourced provision).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club every day during term time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement from good to outstanding by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching, through continuing to guide improvements and sharing excellent practice
 - eliminating the very small residue of teaching that requires improvement, through continuing to check carefully on the quality and impact of teaching in lessons and through on-going staff training.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's skills are generally below and sometimes well below those typically expected for their age when they start school in the Nursery class. Good teaching and a lively curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage help them to progress well. They quickly become eager and enthusiastic learners. Those who are learning to speak English make a good start as a result of the effective support they are given. Pupils' skills are still a little below those typically expected for their age when they enter Key Stage 1.
- Across the school, pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They listen well in lessons and always try hard to do their best work. They present their work neatly and take a pride in their achievements. They work together well, with a partner or in a group.
- Pupils who are new to the school often have low starting points; they are often newly arrived in the country and are at a very early stage of learning English. The school's data show that these pupils usually progress well, although the standards they reach are often below or well below those for most pupils nationally and below those of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils who remain at the school for all or most of their primary education reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards across the whole school are rising quickly and are now much closer to what is expected of all pupils across the country. The proportion of pupils who do even better than this is increasing, year on year.
- Pupils make good overall progress as they move up through the school. They make rapid progress in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is especially effective.
- In 2012 all Year 6 pupils, including those with English as their additional language, pupils with special educational needs and pupils known to be entitled to pupil premium funding, made excellent progress from their starting points.
- In the current year, evidence from the school's data, from lessons and from the work in pupils' books all show that achievement is good overall in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve well by the end of the year. Pupils' progress is excellent in lessons where teaching is outstanding and good in the majority of lessons, where teaching is good. In the small minority of lessons where teaching requires improvement, pupils' progress is not always as good as it could be.
- Effective teaching of letters and sounds gives pupils the tools they need to approach reading with improved confidence. Standards in reading have risen and are now average overall with some above average standards by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Regular reading sessions for all year groups foster a real love of reading in pupils and helps them to improve their understanding of what they are reading. Older pupils are starting to read widely.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is contributing strongly to on-going improvements in pupils' learning and progress. In a small minority of lessons further improvement is needed to bring the quality of teaching up to good.
- Typical features of the good and outstanding teaching seen during the inspection include:
 - well-planned lessons, with interesting activities matched well to pupils' varying abilities and needs
 - clear explanations, so pupils know what they are expected to learn and to do
 - good attention to timings, so that lessons move along briskly and pupils' interest is sustained throughout the lesson
 - effective teamwork between teachers and skilled teaching assistants, so that all pupils are given the support they need
 - very effective use of marking, helping pupils to know what they need to do to improve their

work.

- In the few less effective lessons, weaker teaching holds some pupils back a little. Sometimes this is because the part of the lesson when the teacher is speaking to the whole class goes on for too long, so that some pupils lose concentration. Sometimes, it is because pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills through practical activities in the lesson.
- Where teaching is good work is well-matched to pupils' abilities and so they learn well. However, sometimes work is not hard enough to challenge the more able pupils and so they do not learn as much or as fast as they could.
- Where teaching is outstanding, there is a high level of challenge for all pupils and particularly for the more able. Pupils respond to this very well. In an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils were deeply absorbed in solving mathematical problems in order to complete a family tree. After an introductory discussion with their teacher, they decided together on the best way to approach the task, showing that they could use a range of mathematical operations with confidence. They worked systematically and completed the task accurately, showing excellent progress in learning how to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve 'real' problems.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour, courtesy and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They feel very secure in school and they are confident that adults are always there to help if they have a problem.
- Parents' comments and questionnaire responses show that they value the care and safety the school provides for their children and that they have great confidence in the headteacher and staff.
- Pupils understand issues around different types of bullying, including bullying through the internet or text messages, and how it should be dealt with. They say that racism is not tolerated in their school and that the staff would not allow bullying. When pupils fall out with each other, they are often able to sort matters out for themselves, with the help of buddies from Year 6, who can talk them through their problems and help to find a solution.
- Pupils have an exceptionally well-developed and well-informed awareness and acceptance of differences in faiths and cultures. They speak knowledgeably about the main festivals that occur through the year and they understand and respect various religious observances, including the need for some pupils to take time to pray during the day.
- They show a real understanding of issues faced by some of their peers who have additional behavioural or emotional needs, saying that some people need extra help from the learning mentors so that they can feel safe and happy in school.
- Pupils are actively involved in helping to make the school a happy place for everyone. They readily take on responsibility, for example, as school councillors, buddies and team captains.
- Pupils with additional learning, health, language and social needs, including those in the additional places that the local authority provides, are supported extremely well. The school's Inclusion Team keeps a sharp focus on helping pupils to overcome difficulties to learning and improving pupils' achievement. This is helping pupils to do increasingly well at school. The team works very closely with the speech and language therapy service, which operates from the school site, and they have strong partnerships with a wide range of other agencies that support pupils' well-being.
- The school provides extremely good support for pupils and families whose circumstances might put them at risk. This includes the 'think room', where trained staff provide therapeutic support for pupils experiencing stress or anxiety.
- Attendance is in line with national average figures. This represents an improvement over recent years and reflects the success of the school's continuous efforts to promote good attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, the very effective deputy headteacher and the assistant headteachers are a strong team; they show great determination in driving forward improvements. With help from the middle leaders in school, they regularly check on the quality of teaching and the difference it makes to pupils' progress. The leadership of teaching is supported by an extensive programme of staff training and development.
- Detailed progress reviews each term give the school a very clear picture of how well every pupil is doing and help identify anyone who may need additional support.
- The school development plan is well thought out. It sets out 'milestones' against which leaders can measure the school's success in meeting its targets across the year. This helps leaders to have a clear picture of how well the school is doing.
- Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language, for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the resourced provision, and for pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is led and managed extremely well by the deputy headteacher. Inclusion Team members have a wide range of specialist skills and they work well together. They also provide training for all staff to ensure everyone's skills are up to date.
- Two middle leaders have ensured that very effective leadership is sustained in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the period leading up to the appointment of a new leader in January 2013.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional teaching assistant and learning mentor support for pupils and also to help to pay for enrichment activities, such as out of school visits, for those pupils who are entitled to this support.
- The school's curriculum enables pupils to work on topics in lessons that engage their interests well. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in topic work and this is contributing well to improving their achievement. The curriculum is enriched by many visits and visitors, by opportunities to learn French and to develop sporting, artistic and musical skills and by a good range of after-school activities.
- The local authority provides effective support for this good school, through regular advice and support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors' detailed knowledge and understanding of pupils' achievement and of the quality of teaching and learning in the school enables them to play an active part in checking the school's work. Their involvement in managing staff performance ensures that everyone is held to account for pupils' progress. The governing body is fully aware of the link between staff performance and salary progression. Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent wisely to help pupils to overcome difficulties that stand in the way of successful learning. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively, ensuring that safeguarding procedures are managed well and reviewed regularly. They ensure that equal opportunities are promoted vigorously and that discrimination is not tolerated in school. There is an on-going programme of training for governors and governors often join the staff at their training events.

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	105484
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	402977

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	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miguel Jackson
Headteacher	Jayne Kennedy
Date of previous school inspection	14 April 2008
Telephone number	0161 881 2158
Fax number	0161 881 2158
Email address	t.elliott@barlowhallprimary.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

