

Barrow Island Community Primary School

Duke Street , Barrow, LA14 1LF

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching varies and teachers do not always meet the needs of the different ability groups in their classes. In some lessons pupils spend too long listening to their teachers and questions fail to encourage discussion and explanations.
- Pupils' skills in punctuation and spelling require improvement. Pupils lack the confidence in mathematics to use their number skills to solve problems.
- Achievement requires improvement. Pupils' progress is not fast enough particularly in Years 2 and 3 and in writing and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Management of the school has improved and leaders are successfully tackling weaker aspects. Teaching is improving and more pupils now make good progress. The school is growing in strength to make further improvements.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those for whom the school receives extra funding benefit from effective support and make good progress.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils get on well together and take an interest in their work. Pupils feel safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited nine lessons or part lessons taught by six teachers. They scrutinised pupils' work, observed the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, pupils and a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors analysed the school improvement planning, minutes from governing body meetings, pupil assessment and tracking information and other documentation relating to the inspection, including that regarding safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the seven responses to the online Parent View and the school's own parents' questionnaires to establish the views of parents.

Inspection team

Adrian Francis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to help particular pupils) is larger than average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are much smaller than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported at school action is above average while the proportion at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is not significantly different from the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are taught in single-aged classes throughout the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Reception class.
- The school is currently housed in a disused local secondary school building while its own premises are being refurbished. During this period a large proportion of the pupils travel to school by specially contracted coach service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and the progress pupils make by ensuring that:
 - all lessons proceed at a brisk pace and give pupils the time they need to apply and consolidate the skills they are learning
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high and work is set at the correct level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities and they know how to improve
 - when pupils are asked questions they explain their answers in detail so that teachers can assess their understanding of their current work.
- Raise attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that activities are consistently challenging for pupils of all ability
 - improving pupils' skills in spelling and punctuation
 - strengthening pupils' ability to use their basic numeracy skills and knowledge to solve problems.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the school with skills and abilities generally below the level expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in most aspects of their development. They are confident and happy and get on well together and with adults. By the end of the Reception Year most children are attempting to write simple sentences, have improved their knowledge of letters and sounds and reading and are beginning to count confidently.
- Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 varies between classes. Overall progress requires improvement because too few pupils of all abilities make good progress. However, more pupils especially in Years 1 and 6 now make the progress expected of them. Year 6 pupils make good progress and there is an increase in the number of more-able pupils reaching above average levels.
- Despite good progress in Year 1, attainment by the end of Year 2 is not yet good enough, particularly in writing. Pupils' skills in spelling and punctuation are not developed well enough to give them confidence in their writing and many do not produce the quality or quantity of work that would be expected.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is rising and is now close to the level expected. Pupils write for a variety of purposes and when teachers' expectations are high pupils produce some high quality work. However, writing requires improvement because not all teachers consistently correct errors in punctuation and spelling and pupils continue to make mistakes.
- In mathematics, pupils' work shows that they are confident to use their number skills to do calculations but when solving problems pupils often make mistakes in knowing how to tackle a problem and where to start.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. In several classes they make better progress than their peers because of the extra help they receive. There is a similar picture for pupils for whom the school receives additional funds through pupil premium. For both of these groups, additional support for reading and number work has meant that the school has been successful in raising their attainment and in many cases closing the gap between their levels and all pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Effective leadership has led to more teaching being good and this was seen during the inspection. However, overall the quality of teaching requires improvement because it varies between year groups. It is not yet good enough across the school to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- In lessons that require improvement the pace of teaching is not brisk enough and pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher or being stopped too often during their work. In a small number of classes teachers' expectations are not high enough. Work is set that fails to meet the needs of all pupils. This means that more-able pupils are not always stretched and sometimes find their work too easy and lower-ability pupils are not able to get on with their work quickly enough as they find it too difficult.
- Most teachers make it clear to pupils in the introduction what they are going to learn in the lesson. This gives pupils a clearer understanding about the purpose of their activities. In the most effective lessons pupils have checklists of what is needed to produce high quality work. These lists are referred to throughout the lesson and enable pupils to check their own work. In lessons where this does not happen pupils find it more difficult to explain what they are learning and what is needed to improve.
- Planning has improved and more lessons lead to good progress because the sequence of activities is well planned. For example, pupils in Year 1 were able to apply their knowledge of the structure of a story to their own writing and were producing high quality work on the theme of

the Billy Goats Gruff.

- In some classes, teachers use questions well and they get pupils to explain their answers fully. This helps pupils develop a good understanding of their work and helps teachers to assess how well the pupils are doing. However, in other classes too many questions are simple and can be answered by one or two words. Pupils do not have to explain why or how they have worked their answers out. This especially restricts learning how to solve problems in numeracy.
- In lessons, pupils sometimes work in groups. Pupils discuss their work before deciding how to answer questions or what to write. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to speak to each other and also to make sure they listen to each other well. However, this is not the same in all classes and, in some, pupils are not encouraged to use the opportunity for discussion to help them with their work.
- The quality of marking is generally good. Comments often tell pupils what they need to do to improve. In this way they can practise what they got wrong or extend and improve their work by thinking about the next step they have to take. Although it is not this effective in every class, there have been clear improvements across the school over the past year.
- Pupils say they enjoy school because lessons are usually fun and interesting and this reflects the good relationships between staff and pupils. They enjoy the way in which they work on their topics, especially when they are able to go on an educational visit. One class was eagerly looking forward to visiting Blackpool Tower.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around school and in lessons is good. If a pupil is distracted in class it is usually because they have been given work that is too easy or too hard. The school's behaviour policy is followed and pupils clearly understand how this works.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school. They enjoy school and say they feel safe and well cared for and know who they should talk to if they are having any difficulties or problems. They respect staff and say that teachers and other staff help them to do well in school. The systems in place for supporting pupils' pastoral needs are well developed and very effective.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual to lessons. They are polite, friendly and well mannered and they move about school in a safe and orderly manner. Records kept by the school show few reported incidents of poor behaviour and those that do occur are dealt with effectively following the school's policy.
- Pupils say there is very little bullying, that pupils get on well together and that adults are on hand to respond to the minor disagreements that arise from time to time. The small number of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire expressed some concern about behaviour and safety but the larger response to a school parental questionnaire conducted recently indicated most were very satisfied.
- Pupils understand different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and can speak clearly about how to keep themselves safe. They understand the consequences of bullying to the victim and also the person doing the bullying.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a very clear view on what needs to be done to raise performance in the school. Actions have been put in place that have been successful in bringing about clear improvements in the quality of teaching, particularly over the past year. Pupils' progress, although not yet fast enough, is accelerating with evidence of good progress in several lessons. The effective leadership is sustaining this progress during a difficult time as pupils are housed in an older building awaiting the refurbishment of their own school. There is a clear picture of capacity to sustain this improvement.

- The school has an effective way of checking how well pupils are progressing. Pupils who are not making enough progress are monitored by teachers and by senior staff and given additional support. Success can be seen in the good progress that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make. Records show that more pupils now make good progress although this is not yet consistent in all classes. This improvement to tracking progress is ensuring more effective promotion of equal opportunity for all pupils.
 - Checking on the quality of teaching is much more rigorous. Teachers are now very clear about how well they are performing and the areas which they need to improve. All of these areas are not yet fully resolved leading to variations between classes. Nevertheless, the monitoring leads to effective training for teachers linked to their needs as well as the school's priorities.
 - Teachers are now held more to account for the progress pupils in their class make. The management of teachers' performance and salary increases are now more closely related to the progress pupils make.
 - The school's plan for improvement links well to its evaluation of strengths and areas to improve. It focuses on the main priorities with precise actions and systems to check on their success. The headteacher's drive and determination ensures that staff and governors are involved in checking on how well the school is improving and what are the next steps.
 - Effective leadership has improved the curriculum. Subjects are more closely linked together so that learning is more purposeful for pupils. Topics now include a variety of different subjects, and include opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in mathematics, reading and writing. This approach makes learning more exciting as well as contributing to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many lessons include practical work and this particularly supports the progress of pupils who find learning more difficult.
 - The school uses its pupil premium funds well to support pupils. It has funded additional time for teaching assistants as well as funding a learning mentor and a member of staff whose role it is to support pupils with their social and emotional needs. Pupils who have received some of this help often do better in key stage tests than similar pupils across the country. The school has a clear idea on how much money is available, what it is spent on and how effective it has been. This information is reported to governors.
 - The local authority provides effective support for this school and works effectively with the headteacher and leadership team to maintain the improvements being made to the quality of teaching.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ask pertinent questions to challenge the school to improve. Governors monitor the work of the school, including teaching, through visits, monitoring data about progress and the headteacher's report. There is a strong focus on further improving the quality of teaching and evaluating the impact this has on improving pupils' achievement. Governors check to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding meet all current requirements. They manage the school's budget well and check that spending, including the pupil premium has a positive impact on outcomes for the school.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 112236 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 405384 |

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 | 146 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Carly Buckingham |
| Headteacher | Janet Dixon |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16 September 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01229 820302 |
| Fax number | Not Applicable |
| Email address | headteacher@barrowisland.cumbria.sch.uk |

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