

Banister Primary School and Nursery

Banister Gardens, Westrow Road, Southampton, SO15 2LX

Inspection dates 13–14 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since her appointment, the new headteacher has adopted a rigorous approach to the use of data about pupils' performance and provided significant professional development for teachers.
- Teaching is now outstanding in almost all lessons and never less than good. It meets the needs of all groups of pupils and is helping them to make rapid progress.
- Children make especially good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By Year 2 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average.
- Pupils are resourceful, reflective and ready to learn. Teachers have high expectations and pupils have high aspirations.
- Pupils' attendance has improved this year and is now good. Pupils are very keen to come to school and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school life. They behave impeccably at all times and feel very safe and well cared for.
- The headteacher's clear vision and strong drive, together with the skills of the new business manager, are helping to create an ambitious, effective and well-prepared staff team.
- Governors are very supportive and have been especially successful in managing the development of the new school building.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There has not yet been time for the outstanding teaching to secure for all pupils the progress of which they are capable.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) resources are insufficient.
- Governors do not monitor the work of the school rigorously enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons, observing eight teachers across the school and six teaching assistants in the Nursery and Reception. They also talked to pupils about their work and heard pupils read, including individual pupils in Year 2.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including pupils' work, systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement, records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. Telephone conversations took place with a school adviser from the local authority and an independent education consultant.
- Questionnaires from 12 members of staff were analysed. The inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents and carers in 32 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and during informal meetings with parents and carers before school.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Banister is an average-sized infant school which will become a primary school incrementally, one year at a time beginning with Year 3, from September 2013.. The new school building will open next term. All pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school has a nursery which children can join from the age of three.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion of those at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed services) is average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who are at the very early stages of learning English, is exceptionally high. There are currently 35 different languages spoken in the school.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2012.
- The school provides a breakfast club run by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise pupils' levels of attainment and improve their progress in English and mathematics by:
 - continuing to extend existing outstanding practice in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving ICT resources so that pupils can develop their ICT skills and more effectively practise their reading, writing and mathematics in all subjects.
- Improve the governing body's ability to monitor the school's performance by ensuring that governors:
 - are more fully involved in the school's strategic development and have a very clear view of its strengths and weaknesses
 - attend the tailor-made training in monitoring offered by the local authority.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children join the school with levels of knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age, especially in all aspects of literacy. Many are in the very early stages of learning to speak English.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, all groups of children, especially those in the first stages of acquiring English, are exceptionally well supported and make very good progress. For example, children's language and writing skills were expertly developed and the children were appropriately challenged when involved in a story called *Whatever Next*. They competently wrote lists of what they would like to take to the moon and were able to explain the reasons for their choices.
- Sounds and letters are taught very effectively, every day, in a very ordered sequence. As a result even the youngest children are able to sound out, read and write words such as 'big' and 'get'. As they progress to Year 1, they are challenged to sound out and spell more difficult words such as 'milkshake' and to make the right shape with their mouths so that their pronunciation is correct.
- There is a strong reading culture in the school. Pupils enjoy books and use the strategies they are taught to help them tackle unfamiliar words. They make good progress and many are beginning to read with fluency and expression.
- Key Stage 1 tasks and tests in 2012 showed that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. However, since September, more outstanding teaching has begun to raise attainment and help pupils to make more rapid progress. This was clear from lessons observed during the inspection, the scrutiny of pupils' work, especially their writing, and records of the school's monitoring of the quality of teaching during the course of the year.
- Pupils are not making the progress they should in ICT because ICT resources in the school are currently insufficient and do not support pupils' learning across subjects.
- Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are extremely well supported, and as a result make similar progress to all other pupils. During a mathematics lesson where pupils were learning to count in twos, fives and 10s, a small group of lower-attaining pupils made very good progress because a highly skilled teaching assistant helped them to arrange coloured teddies in twos before counting, while the teacher engaged more-able pupils in a 'head to head' challenge involving fives and 10s.
- Pupil premium funding is being used very effectively to enhance provision in reading, especially at home, and to enable bilingual support for emergent English. A number of other smaller initiatives ensure that pupils arrive at school on time, enjoy breakfast and take part in after-school activities that improve their social and emotional development. Information shows that these pupils' progress is greater than that expected nationally.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. A system based on developing pupils' resilience, reflectiveness, resourcefulness, responsibility and readiness to learn (the '5 Rs') is used consistently in all lessons. The system is very effective in encouraging pupils to be ready to learn and underpins the outstanding teaching in the school. Appropriate and interesting tasks help teachers to generate high levels of engagement and commitment from pupils at the start of lessons alongside very good use of interactive whiteboards.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is excellent. Learning is exciting and stimulating, well planned and very carefully assessed.
- Lessons across the school are thoroughly planned and tasks meet the needs of all pupils very well. There is no wasted time because teachers and teaching assistants are very well organised, ensuring that good quality resources are always ready. This preparation moves the lessons on at

a good pace and ensures that pupils' productivity is high. For example, more-able pupils were given a challenging, independent task at the beginning of a mathematics lesson while others worked with the teacher until their learning was more secure.

- Teachers very skilfully check pupils' understanding with carefully focused questions enabling them to make very good progress from their various starting points.
- Teachers' marking is excellent and tells pupils very clearly how to improve their work. Pupils respond positively and quickly to teachers' constructive comments.
- In discussion with teachers, inspectors found that it was the emphasis on marking and the readiness to learn that have raised the quality of teaching so quickly and are having the greatest impact on pupils' progress.
- Opportunities for pupils to work together, discussing their ideas with their talk partners and supporting one another in their learning, make a substantial contribution to the development of their social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- There have been no exclusions since the last inspection and incidents of bad behaviour or bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils behave impeccably in lessons, around the building and in the playground. Pupils said that everyone is very friendly and observations at break times during the inspection demonstrated that they play exceptionally well together. The comments of adults in the school and of parents and carers fully support this view.
- Pupils have a very good idea of how to stay safe, knowing, for example, not to speak to strangers. They are confident that they know who to go to if they have a problem.
- The school has introduced rigorous procedures for dealing with the previously unacceptably high level of absence during school term time. These measures have been very successful: attendance has improved rapidly and is now good.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and good attendance are making a significant contribution to their improving progress.
- The aptly named pupils' 'Learning Council' provides excellent opportunities for these young pupils to develop their personal and social skills.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has demonstrated exceptional skills in school improvement. Her huge enthusiasm and drive have helped to turn the whole staff into a very strong and expert team, fully committed to further development. This in turn has brought about more rapid progress in learning for all groups of pupils during the short time she has been in post.
- Careful and regular monitoring throughout the school has ensured accurate self-evaluation which has led to the appropriate priorities being identified and set. Swift actions have already led to exceptional improvement in some areas of the school's work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have benefited significantly from individualised, professional development through the rigorous but sensitive management of their performance. The headteacher has sought out very high-quality coaching that has raised the skills of teachers so that their teaching is now regularly outstanding.
- Newly introduced, robust systems for analysing pupils' attainment and progress have resulted in a more realistic view of pupils' levels of knowledge and skill. Teachers have learned very quickly how to use these systems to plan tasks and show pupils what they need to do next.
- The headteacher has been very ably assisted by the business manager: a recent appointment that has enabled the headteacher to focus entirely on improving teaching and learning. All of

these measures demonstrate that the school has an excellent capacity for further development.

- The leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, special educational needs and English as an additional language are very competent. However, the headteacher realises that the skills of other middle and senior leaders require development as the school moves to becoming a primary school in September. Appropriate plans are already in place for the support of new leadership roles and the induction of newly qualified teachers.
 - There are very good links between subjects, but the school realises the need for pupils to keep practising their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across subjects as they move into Year 3 and beyond. A review of the curriculum is underway and new ICT hardware is being installed in the new school building. Exciting visits, visitors and after-school activities such as the drumming club and dance, offer powerful enrichment opportunities.
 - The school has excellent partnerships with other schools, external agencies and within the wider area. It takes every opportunity to celebrate diversity, following its maxim of 'uniting nations into one community'. As a result, there is excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted very well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and the school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and all requirements are fully met.
 - The local authority offers the school a light level of support in some areas of its work.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school and have successfully taken on responsibility for the project management of the new school building. They carry out their statutory duties diligently undergoing specific training for safeguarding pupils. With the help of an independent education consultant they have set rigorous objectives for the headteacher. Governors have received information about teachers' performance and salary progression and about the use of the pupil premium and its impact on eligible pupils. They do not, as yet, have sufficiently robust systems for monitoring the school's overall performance, however, so are not able to ask the challenging questions that would help the school in its quest for continuing improvement.
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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	116116
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	412649
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter MacBride
Headteacher	Kate Vincent
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 May 2010
Telephone number	02380 393313
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