

Barnham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Mill Lane, Barnham, Thetford, IP24 2NG

Inspection dates 10–11 July 2013

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.

- Pupils make good progress and reach levels above those expected in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- The progress made in the Reception class is often outstanding, with many children achieving levels above those normally expected.
- The rising proportion of pupils entitled to the additional funding often makes better progress than their peers due to the quality of help and guidance they receive.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning and good relationships with adults.
- Teaching often has a good pace and teachers' questioning ensures pupils are fully involved. The feedback provided for pupils has improved since the last inspection and is now of good quality, especially in response to pupils' writing.
- The headteacher provides strong, very effective leadership. He has developed excellent systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress. These are having a very positive impact on teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although above average, standards in mathematics are not as consistently high as in reading and writing because pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their number skills in solving problems.
- Teachers do not consistently provide enough activities that really stretch pupils, especially the most able.
- Pupils do not always understand exactly what is expected of them in lessons or what they need to do to be successful.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at carefully. Some pupils read books to the inspector.
- The inspector analysed and took account of the 35 responses to the online survey (Parent View) as well as the responses to a recent questionnaire sent out to parents and carers by the school.
- In addition, 13 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at key inspection documents, including performance data produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, self-evaluation work, reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Barnham Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who do not speak English as a first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- An average proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The school is part of the local authority's reorganisation of schools from three-tier to two-tier, and from September 2014 will have Year 5 and 6 pupils and become an all-through primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by providing more opportunities for problem solving and practical activities that encourage pupils to work independently and extend their thinking skills.
- Make more of the teaching outstanding by:
 - spreading the existing best practice more widely
 - ensuring lessons extend and challenge the most able pupils
 - helping pupils understand exactly what is expected of them in lessons and how they will know they have been successful.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start in the Reception classes with knowledge and understanding below the expected levels for their age, especially for their communication and personal and social skills. They make outstanding progress during the year and the levels at the end of Reception are above those typically found nationally.
- The school's results in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were well above average. The school has continued to improve the teaching of reading and pupils are usually grouped so that teachers and teaching assistants can target lessons better to meet pupils' needs. Inspection evidence suggests that the current Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve results similar to last year.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have risen over the last two years and are now above average. This represents good progress from their starting points. The current Year 2 pupils are making progress that is better than that expected, especially in reading, and have reached standards that are the highest for the last five years.
- Standards at the end of Year 4 are consistently higher than those expected. Currently the school's data show that in Years 3 and 4, progress is better than that expected in reading, writing and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics. Pupils' attainment in mathematics, although above average, is lower than that in reading and writing. This is mainly because fewer pupils reach the higher levels and they do not have well developed problem-solving skills.
- The work in pupils' books shows good progress in the development of their writing skills. This is clear for all, but especially some of the lower attaining pupils. For example, one pupil in Year 1 made excellent progress this year from early letter formation to writing accurate sentences.
- Good examples of the use of speaking and listening skills to help develop pupils' vocabulary were evident in lessons. In Reception and Year 1, for example, pupils discussed together the characteristics of their imaginary creature and were then expected to be able to talk about each other's creatures, showing how well they had listened. In Year 4 whole-class session, discussion led to learning about the characteristics of closed and open questions.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is too small to comment on their attainment. However, the evidence suggests that they make progress that is often better than that of their peers and is rapidly narrowing the small gaps in attainment that remain in some cases.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are very well supported. There are no marked differences in the achievement of different groups, including the very small number from a minority ethnic background.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have created a purposeful climate for learning in their classrooms. Pupils talk about how they enjoy lessons and how the teachers help them learn new things. Relationships between adults and pupils are very strong and this supports learning as well as having a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour. The best lessons are paced and keep pupils' interest well. Teachers' questioning is often open and requires pupils to think before answering.

- Teaching assistants often provide effective support to teachers and pupils, particularly when working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The teachers also often use their other adults to work with the more-able pupils. This enables the teaching assistants to see what can be expected from higher attaining pupils, and also enables the teachers to use their skills to promote the learning of less-able pupils.
- Teachers often plan activities that are supported by a stimulating range of resources to ensure that pupils are interested and enjoy their work. For example, the school's wild area was used well to inspire writing in Reception and Year 1, when children discovered creatures in their story book around the pond. However, there are times when the tasks are not explained well enough for pupils to understand exactly what is expected of them or how they will know when they have achieved it.
- Recent changes to marking and the way teachers provide feedback to pupils on their work have had a good impact and the way pupils respond to this advice is evident in their books.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately. Tasks are usually matched well to the different ability levels represented in the class. At times, however, the activities do not provide enough challenge, especially for the most able pupils. In mathematics, for example, teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to use their basic number skills in practical situations and to solve problems.
- In the Reception classes, children's outstanding progress in learning basic skills is supported through well-chosen resources and opportunities for children to choose learning activities for themselves. The practice in the Early Years is often used as a very positive exemplar by other local schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Teachers establish strong and positive relationships with children when they start in Reception, which supports children's attitudes to school and learning. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons. In Year 2, for example, pupils listened to each other with interest as they made suggestions for using a variety of pencil techniques.
 - Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. Parents and carers are very positive about behaviour and say the school manages behaviour well. Pupils are friendly, polite and considerate to others, including visitors. A good system of rewards and sanctions ensures that any issues that may arise are quickly dealt with in a positive way. Even so, a few pupils occasionally disrupt others' learning.
 - Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare. They are confident that if any occurred it would be dealt with well by staff. They have some awareness of how new technology can be used safely, but the school has plans to extend this further with more training for pupils and their parents and carers. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, whether as school councillors or doing jobs such as helping look after the school's chickens.
 - Attendance is average when compared with similar schools. There are very few persistent absentees. The school currently has a good relationship with education welfare staff and has recently tightened systems for encouraging good attendance to reflect the school's raised
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expectations.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school very effectively since his appointment two years ago. Detailed development planning provides the school with a clear set of targets and aims for further improvement. Responsibilities are divided appropriately, given the size of the school. The work of subject leaders and others with leadership responsibilities, such as for the Early Years, shows that the school has a strong capacity to continue improving.
- The headteacher and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning by observing lessons and checking pupils' work and teachers' planning. In addition, pupils' progress and attainment are carefully tracked so that the performance of individuals and groups can be analysed. Regular meetings between headteacher and teachers regarding pupils' progress are held so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and tackled.
- Teachers' performance is checked carefully to identify strengths and weaknesses through a good appraisal system. The challenging targets set for teachers are based appropriately on improving pupils' progress, the priorities in the school improvement plan, and individual professional development.
- The local authority provides appropriately light-touch support for this good school. Training for staff and the governing body regarding the change of status to a primary school has been provided. Exemplary aspects of the school's work are now being used to support other schools in the authority with, for example, the provision for the youngest children.
- The funding available through the pupil premium is used effectively to help eligible pupils to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time. The progress made by these pupils is closely monitored by the headteacher and the data clearly indicate that any remaining gaps in attainment are narrowing.
- The curriculum is good, with imaginative links between subjects that bring learning to life. For example, the study of Africa helped improve pupils' cultural understanding as well as their learning in geography and art and design. Pupils are able to take part in a very wide range of interesting and uplifting experiences, such as the recent visit from a Sikh and visits to London musicals, which contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's engagement with parents and carers is effective and professional. They are kept well informed and have good opportunities to talk to staff before and after school, as well as at more formal occasions such as parents' evenings. 'Sharing' assemblies are a very positive and professional way of explaining and celebrating the pupils' work.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body has improved its strategic role since the last inspection, helped by the detailed information provided by the headteacher. Governors effectively support and challenge the school. Together with the headteacher, they have led the school well through its change of status and preparations for having older pupils over the next two years. Frequent visits to the school that are well recorded and reported help give governors a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses and pupils' achievement. An effective structure of committees ensures that governors' work is efficiently carried out. Governors have a clear picture of teaching quality, and understand how targets are set for teachers and how the school would deal with

any underperformance. Governors ensure that salary increases are linked to the progress made by pupils, teaching quality and responsibilities. They have made good decisions over the spending of the pupil premium and check its impact on pupils' progress carefully. The governing body makes sure that all national requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

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	124688
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	406263

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Chacksfield
Headteacher	Simon Rance
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2011
Telephone number	01842 890253
Email address	ad.barnham.p@talk21.com

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