

Barnabas Oley CofE Primary School

Little Lane, Great Gransden, Sandy, SG19 3AE

Inspection dates 5–6 November 2013

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good. The headteacher undertakes regular reviews of teaching and progress to improve them even further.
- The headteacher leads the school very well and sets a good tone. Staff enjoy working in the school.
- Parents are very pleased with the school and the progress that their children make.
- Pupils behave well and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Management of the school is good.
- The governing body is led very well by the Chair of the Governing Body and, as a result, governors are active in holding the school to account.
- There are good links between subjects in the form of themes which interest the pupils.
- The school is at the heart of the community. Pupils learn from the contributions and expertise of village residents. There are close links with the church.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress and attainment in writing are not yet good enough. Pupils' handwriting is not always as neat and well formed as it should be. Pupils are not reminded regularly enough how they can improve the content and structure of their writing.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop longer pieces of writing to practise grammatical skills.

Information about this inspection

- Eleven lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Two joint observations were undertaken with the headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills.
- He sampled pupils' work in different year groups, examined records of pupils' progress and read the school's self-evaluation and school development plan. A range of other documentation was examined, including those relating to safeguarding.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a member of the local authority's advisory staff.
- The views of staff were sought and 12 responded to a written questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at the 92 responses from parents on Parent View, the website for parents' views about their children's school. He also took account of the views of parents who wished for personal discussions with the inspector.

Inspection team

Peter Sudworth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized school.
- Almost all the pupils are White British.
- Pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes.
- A much smaller proportion of pupils than usual are entitled to the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for children who are looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals.
- In the last academic year, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action was around the national average, as was the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. There has been an increase this academic year in the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2011.
- Building works were taking place during the inspection and the outdoor area in the Reception class could not be used.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and rates of progress in writing further by:
 - providing regular opportunities for pupils to write independently and practise their punctuation and grammar in longer, high-quality pieces of work
 - improving the appearance and quality of handwriting and making sure that more pupils write in a joined script
 - ensuring that pupils are more aware how to improve their writing
 - setting more frequent targets for pupils in writing and visiting these frequently to assess progress towards them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally join the school with attainment broadly meeting expectations for their age. However, this can vary from year to year as numbers in the Reception class are smaller than usually found and attainment is dependent on the proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs or those who are more able. They make good progress in the Reception class in line with their abilities.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Overall attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. In the main, it is generally better in mathematics and reading than in writing. Attainment in writing is around the national average. Results in the most recent national screening in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) were around the national average and were above average the previous year.
- Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average. It is generally marked by a good level of consistency over time, with pupils leaving the school in most years the equivalent of more than two terms ahead of pupils nationally. Results in 2013 were not as high as usual because several pupils in the small group had special educational needs.
- Pupils' good attitudes to their work and interest in learning support the good progress made.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified quickly, individual difficulties explored and support arranged to help them.
- No Year 6 pupils in the last two years were eligible for pupil premium funding. Comparisons between the results of those entitled to the funding and those who are not cannot be made. The needs of the small number of pupils elsewhere in the school who are eligible for the pupil premium are analysed carefully. Good use is made of the money, which contributes to their good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because they are heard to read regularly and parents also provide good support. Work in mathematics is well matched to pupils' abilities. Good attention is paid to stretching able pupils.
- Pupils speaking and listening skills are better than usually found, with a good choice of vocabulary used.
- Writing, although improving, is often the weakest aspect of pupils' work. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length, develop stamina and concentrated thought to apply the skills that they have learned. Additionally, too many pupils use print or an incomplete joined style. This slows down the speed at which they write.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching throughout the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, encourages pupils' interest in their learning and supports their good progress. Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils in an atmosphere of respect.

- Teachers plan well for the different ages and abilities in the mixed-age classes. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers ensure that there is good supervision of different learning groups.
- Staff make good use of electronic touch screens to explain the work, which helps to maintain pupils' attention. In a Reception phonics lesson, a video clip was used which indicated to the children how to shape their mouth to make a particular sound. This supported their learning.
- Teachers make good use of questioning and teachers often get pupils to explain their calculation methods in mathematics, which helps the teacher to assess pupils' understanding.
- Time is used well and lessons begin promptly. Lessons are well planned and teaching assistants are clear about their roles.
- The teaching of reading is good. Staff have a good knowledge of teaching phonics and group pupils effectively by ability. Teachers set appropriate amounts of homework, often linked to the themes that the pupils work on.
- Teachers track pupils' progress regularly and so they identify quickly those who need more concentrated teaching and challenge further pupils who are doing particularly well.
- Marking is up to date, but there is some inconsistency in the extent to which teachers provide written comment to help pupils make further improvements in their writing. Teachers do not demand that pupils pay enough attention to the quality of their handwriting. There is some, but not enough, attention to providing pupils with targets to improve their writing skills. Those that are set are not referred to enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and evidence seen indicates that behaviour has been good over time.
- Pupils are punctual and enjoy school. Their attendance is above average.
- Pupils are attentive in class and take a full part in lessons. One pupil said, 'I like the community at school. It is a warm community and we all get on.'
- Pupils like their teachers and find them 'kind and friendly'. They state that their teachers are helpful and try to make the day as fun as possible.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of safety. They know the importance of keeping safe on the internet and ignoring unknown emails. They understand the importance of not talking to strangers. They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they have a problem.
- Pupils carry out any responsibilities conscientiously, such as assembly helpers and playground mediators. Pupils say that mediators solve problems and deal with pupils who need comforting. 'Mediators calm pupils down and help them', they say.
- Pupils engage well in community events. They also enjoy taking part in out-of-school activities. Pupils raised money to bring a choir of orphans from Uganda to the village and were involved in hosting the children at school and in their homes.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has done much to update policies and documents since her appointment. She is very well respected by parents.
- Throughout the school, there is a clear sense of purpose, based on an equally clear set of values, which promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school's knowledge of itself is accurate. The school development plan sets out clear priorities for development.
- The senior leadership team is increasingly pro-active in taking on leadership responsibilities. Allocations of time provided to subject leaders enables them to review their subjects and keep abreast of strengths and matters that need attention. While writing has been picked up as an issue in these reviews, and there have been recent improvements, action to improve writing has not always been rigorous enough.
- The curriculum has developed well and the thematic approach linking subjects together appeals to the pupils. Good attention is paid to basic skills, although not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length.
- A good range of out-of-school activities supports the pupils' development and interests, with a number of activities developed in partnership with the local community. The local allotment club has helped to set up a gardening club. The local history society took the pupils around the village to explore its history.
- The local authority reviews the school's results annually but has had limited involvement with the school because the pupils make good progress. It involved the headteacher in an induction programme for new headteachers during her first year. The local authority provides advice where necessary, mediating with troubled families and with children who have specific needs.
- The school has very good links with its parents, the vast majority of whom have a high regard for the school and its work and are very pleased with their children's progress. Parents work tirelessly for the school and its pupils through fundraising and supporting in class.
- The school website provides a ready source of reference and communication, including learning materials for pupils to use.
- Appraisal arrangements for staff work well and targets are clearly outlined, with good detail of how success will be judged.
- New government funding for physical education and sport has not yet arrived but the school plans to spend it on specialist coaches who will work with pupils and also alongside teachers so that their skills are raised in teaching physical education. An extension of outdoor pursuits is also planned.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The energetic leadership of the Chair has helped to improve the work of the governing body over the past two years. As a result of their visits to school, governors are now more active and better informed than before about the quality of teaching. They have a good

understanding of attainment and progress data and are able to challenge leaders effectively about this. They are keen to undertake training to improve their skills and have individual training plans.

- Governors are aware of staff appraisal arrangements and have ensured that these are directly linked to teachers' pay and promotion.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- Governors are involved in decisions on the use of pupil premium funding. They know how it is spent and the impact it has.

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	110814
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	425356

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Whinney
Headteacher	Rebecca Smith
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2008
Telephone number	01767 677294
Fax number	01767 677894
Email address	office@barnabasoley.cambs.sch.uk

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