

# Barton CofE VA Primary School

School Lane, Barton, Cambridge, CB23 7BD

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Over the last few years, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly average. Given their starting points, this means that progress is not yet good and is not rising quickly enough.
- Although improving, the quality of teaching across the school varies. Since the last inspection, it has not been consistently good enough to ensure pupils make good progress.
- Too many pupils are not doing as well as they should in mathematics because their progress is not checked often enough in lessons to enable errors to be tackled.
- Where teaching is weaker, some pupils do not always try their best in lessons.
- In some lessons, the work set for the most able pupils is too easy and they are not given enough opportunities to reason and work things out for themselves.
- Teachers' marking in mathematics does not consistently show pupils how to improve their work, and pupils are not always given time to respond to or carry out corrections.
- The writing in different subjects is not of the same quality as seen in literacy books.
- Due to a number of staffing issues over an extended period of time, leaders and managers have not been able to make improvements quickly enough to raise achievement and teaching to good.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and recent improvements in teaching are helping pupils in upper Key Stage 2 to make more rapid progress.
- The school provides a caring and nurturing environment, where pupils feel valued and safe. A good range of activities promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils well.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed pupils in lessons, at play, at lunch and as they moved around school.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and different groups of people involved in the school. These included pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and members of the teaching staff. The lead inspector held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- During the inspection, the inspector took into account the 32 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and during the lunch held especially for mothers before Mothering Sunday.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to the 15 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

## Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Numbers in cohorts vary considerably from year to year. There are four classes. Children in Reception and some from Year 1 are taught as one class. The remaining pupils from Year 1 and those from Year 2 form another class. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught as one class and those in Years 5 and 6 as another.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join the school part way through their primary education.
- The school has had a number of staffing difficulties over several years. These have been caused by long-term absence owing to sickness and maternity leave.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so a greater proportion of pupils make good or better progress, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - checking more regularly in lessons on how well pupils are doing in order to correct mistakes, deal with misconceptions and deepen understanding
  - ensuring marking is always sharply focused on what pupils need to do to improve
  - providing pupils with planned opportunities to carry out the guidance given in marking.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and raise attainment to above-average levels by:
  - making sure that work is set at the right level of difficulty
  - improving the ability of pupils, especially the most able, to think and reason for themselves, so that they rely less on adults to help them
  - making sure that pupils' written work in all subjects is always to the highest standard they can achieve.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - driving forward the current improvements in teaching and achievement at a faster rate
  - developing pupils' attitudes to learning so that pupils are consistently positive in all classes, take pride in their work and are motivated to achieve well.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils **requires improvement**

- There is considerable variation in pupils' attainment from year to year, as year groups are often very small and, in some year groups, there is a high turnover of pupils. Over the last few years, results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly average overall, but they were below average in 2013. Although most pupils made expected progress in reading and writing, an insufficient proportion achieved well enough in mathematics.
- Children start in the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are generally typical for their age. In the safe and happy environment at school, children settle quickly, enjoy learning and benefit by working alongside pupils in Year 1. Children make steady progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they are generally at average levels of attainment.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been above average for the last three years. The last three groups of pupils, therefore, have entered Key Stage 2 better prepared than was the case for pupils currently in Year 6 and those who left in 2013.
- Since September 2013, improvements across the school have resulted in pupils making better progress and standards are improving. This is particularly the case for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Although improving, progress in mathematics across the school remains variable.
- Despite the recent improvements, many pupils still have a legacy of previous underperformance to overcome. Progress for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 is slower than for other pupils because they are not routinely given work that is hard enough for them to move forward in their learning.
- The teaching of reading and writing is generally good. The results of tests of pupils' understanding of letters and sounds (phonics) at the end of Year 1 were above average in 2012 but were below average in 2013. However, the evidence of inspection shows improvement to at least expected levels. This is as a result of a carefully structured daily teaching programme which has raised teachers' expectations and improved pupils' understanding of phonics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have had their needs identified well. Targeted extra help enables them to continue learning, develop their basic skills and improve their rates of progress. Pupils who join the school part way through their schooling are integrated quickly and achieve as well as their classmates.
- The very small numbers supported through the pupil premium make it difficult to provide any meaningful analysis of the attainment gaps between pupils in school. For example, in Year 6 in 2013, there were no pupils for whom the school received pupil premium funding. Evidence indicates that these pupils achieve as well as others.

### The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- Although the quality of teaching and learning is improving, it is too variable, and there is not enough teaching that is consistently good to ensure all pupils make good progress in all classes and subjects.
- Where teaching is less effective, the tasks and activities are not matched carefully enough to

pupils' starting points and capabilities, and pupils do not have enough opportunity to think for themselves and work out how to solve the problems they have been set. In addition, teachers do not check regularly enough on how well pupils are doing, particularly those groups working on their own. This means that their errors and misconceptions are not picked up and corrected. This is particularly an issue in mathematics where some pupils lack confidence in their previous learning and so struggle to apply themselves when presented with new work.

- Pupils are not encouraged to find the answers to problems for themselves often enough. For example, adults are sometimes too quick to provide answers to pupils rather than asking questions to help them or encouraging them to use other sources of reference, such as dictionaries or word banks.
- Marking is not used consistently well throughout the school and, in some cases where work is marked well, the pupils are not given time to respond. Guidance on how to improve is stronger in written work in English than in mathematics books. However, pupils' writing in different subjects does not often match the standard of work they are achieving in literacy. Errors in spelling and punctuation are not addressed consistently by teachers or pupils.
- Additional adults are well trained to provide intensive literacy and numeracy teaching to pupils who need additional support, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the few who are supported through pupil premium funding.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults know the children well and provide good opportunities for developing language skills. Adults intervene when appropriate to ask questions, document progress and help move the children's learning on to the next level.
- There is good teaching in Years 5 and 6, where teachers plan work carefully so that it challenges all pupils, including the most able. This was observed in a mathematics lesson; pupils were challenged to plot coordinates after they had changed a shape. The teacher carefully checked each pupil's answer, dealt with any mistakes and then presented all with a harder task.
- The school uses the primary school sports funding effectively to increase opportunities for pupils to participate in sport. High levels of physical activity are encouraged and make a good contribution to pupils' health and well-being.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because pupils' attitudes to learning are not always positive enough to support good progress in all subjects. Sometimes, a few pupils do not try hard enough or lose interest and need prompting by adults before they continue with their work. Some pupils will stop if they encounter a problem and wait for an adult to come to help them. Attitudes tend to be better where expectations are very high and work is challenging.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, that there is little bullying and that behaviour is usually good but not always. They say that generally everyone is kind towards each other. To a certain extent, this is correct. Many pupils were seen behaving well, particularly in lessons where teachers' expectations were high and they were all well occupied. Pupils generally get on well together during lessons and during breaks. School records confirm that there are few incidents of poor behaviour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Through lessons and other activities, pupils have good opportunities to discuss matters of personal safety and how to manage issues,

such as bullying and racism. Pupils understand well how to stay safe outside school and around the school site. They know how to keep themselves safe online. Most parents and carers interviewed, and those who responded to Parent View, say that the school is safe, their children enjoy school and pupils behave well.

- Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as representing the school at musical and sporting events and helping around the school generally. These and other purposeful experiences support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Procedures to monitor attendance have been reviewed and are thorough. Attendance has improved this year and is now close to the national average for primary schools. Most pupils are punctual to lessons. Where attendance occasionally becomes a concern, the school is quick to act, involving relevant agencies appropriately.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the pace of change has been too slow. Not enough has been done to improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. To a large extent, this is because of staffing instability that leaders and managers could not anticipate or avoid.
- The leadership of teaching has improved but not strongly enough to secure consistently good or better teaching throughout. Key leaders at all levels are now using information on pupils' performance more effectively to identify those who are making slow progress and are introducing support systems to ensure that all pupils make at least steady progress and more make good progress.
- The management of teachers' performance is linked to the nationally expected standards for teachers. The checking done on teachers' performance identifies targets and professional development for each teacher. However, this improved practice in teaching has not yet had time to show improvements in the rates of progress in all subjects and all year groups.
- The school has a good partnership with the local authority, which has provided both support and guidance. The local authority continues to work in partnership with the school. The school has close links with other schools in the area and uses these effectively to provide training opportunities for staff and learning opportunities for the pupils.
- The subjects pupils are taught are broad and balanced, and designed to promote equal opportunity for all pupils to learn through a range of exciting topics supported by various visits. There is a good range of after-school clubs, which the pupils fully enjoy and which are well attended.
- The school uses its primary school sport funding to increase pupils' participation in a wider range of sporting and physical activities than was previously available. Teachers work with a sports specialist to strengthen their skills and increase the potential to develop physical education long term.
- Pupils study different cultures and work in art and religious education which focuses on different faiths. Consequently, pupils are tolerant towards those from different cultures. Through opportunities to play music, take part in community projects and to help others in the school and more widely, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- Although it was not quick to pick up signs of under-performance in the past, the governing body has become much better at identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It now holds leaders to account for the school's performance and is more active in demanding improvement knowing that the school's performance is not good in comparison to other schools nationally. Governors now work more closely with leaders at all levels and use the data to challenge the school on pupils' standards. They undertake training to develop their understanding of their responsibilities. Regular meetings between the link governors and key members of staff make sure governors are informed about improvement in key areas for development, including in teaching. Governors evaluate the school's performance towards the priorities set in the development plan. The governing body makes sure teachers' performance is linked to salary progression and promotion. It checks how the pupil premium funding and primary school sport funding are spent and the impact of both these funds on pupils' learning. The school's safeguarding procedures are monitored as required, as is the financial position of the school to ensure resources are used most effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110829
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	430732

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cathy Martin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Carpenter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 May 2012
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