

# Barrow 1618 CofE Free School

Barrow, Broseley, TF12 5BW

<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 May 2014		
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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	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 and achievement require improvement.
- In the first year of the school's existence pupils did not make enough progress due to weaknesses in teaching. Since that time, achievement has improved but it is not yet good.
- Teaching is not yet good because effective steps are not taken to ensure pupils concentrate and work hard in all lessons.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils are moved quickly on to harder work.
- Opportunities are missed to praise and reward pupils when they try really hard.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to respond to the comments in teachers' marking.
- There are shortcomings in the Early Years Foundation Stage environment that restrict learning for the youngest children.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including the governing body, are now ensuring that the school is improving rapidly. As a result, achievement is rising quickly.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced through lessons that take place in the Forest School.
- Parents are very positive about the school and are being involved well in supporting their children's learning.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are considerate and polite. Attendance is above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, four of which were undertaken jointly with the school's headteacher.
- The inspector held meeting with pupils and spoke to pupils in lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes. The inspector also listened to pupils reading.
- He scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans and a wide range of policies, including those designed to ensure pupils are safe. He also examined the work in some pupils' books and a range of data about their progress.
- The inspector met with teachers, the headteacher and the interim headteacher who was in charge for most of the school's first year. The inspector also met with six members of the governing body and a representative of Telford and Wrekin local authority.
- Telephone discussions were also held with the Director of Education for the Diocese of Hereford and a representative of the provider of alternative education.
- The views of parents were considered through the 44 responses contained on the Parent View website and through informal discussions at the start of the school day. The inspector took account of the school's records of its surveys into parents' views and five letters sent to the inspector.
- The inspector also considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by members of staff.

## Inspection team

Kevin Sheldrick, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Barrow 1618 opened as a free school in September 2012 and is linked to the Church of England Diocese of Hereford.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2013. The school's first headteacher left the school at the end of the first term of opening. An interim headteacher led the school for the remainder of the school's first year.
- The school has grown rapidly since it first opened, but it is still smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school occupies the site of the Barrow C of E Primary School, which closed in August 2012.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those in local authority care) is much lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs that are supported through school action is broadly average. The proportions supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, are above average.
- In 2013, the school met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school seeks to provide 'an innovative curriculum for our pupils, focusing on learning opportunities presented by the natural environment and learning through 'hands-on' experience'. Pupils are educated for part of the week in a nearby forest.

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

- Improve teaching, especially in writing and mathematics, so that it is at least good by:
  - ensuring all pupils concentrate and work hard in all lessons
  - moving pupils, especially the more able, more quickly on to work that is challenging
  - giving greater recognition to pupils' achievements during lessons
  - linking the comments in marking more strongly to pupils' targets, and giving pupils regular opportunities to respond to marking.
- Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing a more extensive outdoor area, including a part that is covered.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils are not yet making good progress because of shortcomings in teaching, particularly during the first year that the school was open. Although teaching has improved, some weaker teaching remains. As a result Pupils do not always work hard enough and their concentration levels wane. Sometimes too much time is devoted to repeating work of a similar standard.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills on entering the school vary considerably. Some have gaps in their previous learning but, overall, pupils enter the school with above average abilities. From these starting points, in the school's first year of operation, children did not make enough progress. Since that time, children's progress has improved, but it is still not yet good.
- In 2013, the Year 1 check on pupils' knowledge and use of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and the Year 2 and Year 6 tests in reading, writing and mathematics showed that pupils' attainment was broadly average.
- The school's data and other inspection evidence show that, during the current school year, progress is more rapid. As a result, attainment has risen accordingly in all key stages and many more pupils are on course to achieve at least the levels expected for their age. This improvement is largely because leaders have taken effective action to plug the gaps in pupils' previous learning and improvements have been made to teaching.
- Pupils' reading is improving fastest because phonics are now taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1. All those pupils who did not meet the national expectations in the 2013 Year 1 screening check now do so because of the additional support that has been given. Some of these pupils are now reading with great confidence and fluency because of their good knowledge of phonics.
- Throughout the school, pupils are reading more because of the additional time devoted to it. The school has successfully involved parents in providing very good support for reading.
- Pupils' work and the observations of teaching indicate that the improvements to writing and mathematics, particularly in Years 2 through to 6, are not as great as those in reading, largely because some weaknesses in teaching persist.
- While children are now generally progressing well in the Year1/Reception class, the progress made by the youngest children is limited because they do not have access to a large enough, conveniently located, outdoor space and there is no outdoor covered area for them to learn and play.
- The few pupils eligible for pupil premium funding have received effective support and are generally achieving in line with most other pupils.
- More-able pupils are now making better progress because they have greater access to more demanding work. For instance, Year 6 pupils have additional sessions to support their work towards achieving level 6, which is well above the level expected for their age. Even so, weaknesses in teaching sometimes limit the progress made by more-able pupils because too much work is unnecessarily repeated in a lesson.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are progressing at a faster rate than their classmates. This is because they have benefited most from the targeted interventions that take place following the more accurate assessments that are taking place.
- Primary school sports funding has been used to make a greater range of sports available to pupils such as tag rugby and tennis. Pupils stated that they appreciate the increased opportunities they have to participate in more sports, particularly at lunchtime and after school.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- In many lessons where teaching requires improvement, pupils spend too much time on work at a similar level and do not move on to more challenging work quickly enough.
- At times, pupils work too slowly because teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- Although teachers regularly mark work and include areas for improvement, the marking is not always effective. Sometimes, pupils are not encouraged to act upon the teachers' suggestions. In addition, the comments made are not linked strongly enough to pupils' individual targets.
- Despite the shortcomings, teaching is improving strongly. Lessons often start well because learning is linked to interesting topics; for example, pupils were undertaking division calculations linked to the manufacture of motor cars.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to learning in most classes. For instance, a teaching assistant successfully reinforced pupils' understanding in science because she asked probing questions that checked the extent to which pupils understood the concept of 'change of state'.
- Since September 2013, reading has been promoted well through a more effective approach to the initial teaching of phonics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. This is a focus in daily assemblies. Pupils were observed reflecting deeply about the significance of Christian Aid Week. They also spoke enthusiastically about their involvement in organising and undertaking some very demanding sponsored fund-raising events during Lent. Teachers ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their social skills through working together.

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

### **are good**

- Pupils behaved very well during the inspection. They told inspectors that behaviour is generally good and only very occasionally is learning affected by off-task behaviour in lessons, for example when they become bored.
- All staff and all parents agree that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils respond well to the school's behaviour management policy. Pupils' excellent awareness of right and wrong is an indicator of the success of the school in effectively promoting pupils' moral

development.

- Attendance has improved since the school opened and is now high for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils are developing positive attitudes to their work, largely as a result of an interesting and stimulating curriculum that emphasises outdoor learning. They talk enthusiastically about the Forest School and the topics they study.
- The large majority of pupils concentrate well in lessons and in assemblies. In some of the less effective lessons, pupils occasionally engage in off-task talk.
- Pupils and their parents indicate that incidents of bullying are very rare. When they occur they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils know about the forms that bullying can take, including that which is prejudice-based. The pupils that have recently joined the school commented positively on how they had been made to feel welcome.
- Pupils are cared for very well. A parent summed this up, 'Nothing goes unnoticed at Barrow 1618, the children are monitored closely and extra support is given as soon as necessary'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Records for behaviour, safeguarding and absence are well organised. Child protection incidents and contacts with external agencies are logged systematically and are reported. The school has had an external audit undertaken to ensure all its practices are safe.
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate risks carefully when undertaking practical subjects or when participating in Forest School. One pupil captured the views of many in stating how she appreciated 'that the school did not stop them doing exciting things on health and safety grounds; for instance, being able to use lighted candles when undertaking a science experiment'.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Staff and parents show very high levels of support for the leadership of the headteacher. This strong support is well deserved because the headteacher is approachable and expresses a clear vision for the future of the school that appeals to all.
- Very effective arrangements have been developed to plug the gaps that existed in pupils' learning caused by weaknesses in teaching. Central to this success has been the establishment of much more accurate and timely assessments of pupils' achievement. The headteacher and other staff have provided additional sessions outside of normal lessons when pupils are not making good progress. This strategy has been crucial in accelerating progress and raising attainment.
- Although there is some way to go, leaders have improved the quality of teaching. There is a strong record of the school challenging underperformance. Performance management is being used well to hold all staff, including teaching assistants, to account for the progress pupils make. Performance management is based on the challenging targets the school has set for itself.
- Professional development is effective. The headteacher has successfully demonstrated the good practice he wants others to emulate. The school has strong links with a range of schools and Telford and Wrekin Local Authority, which it uses to gain access to expertise. For instance, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been helped to develop a clear vision for how excellent

provision can be created.

- The school's self-review is accurate and demonstrates that leaders understand the priorities that need to be addressed. The school has developed robust plans to address the weaknesses.
- The headteacher has high expectations and sharp insights into the strengths and weaknesses in teaching in the school.
- Subject leaders are largely new to their posts but they have already demonstrated an astute awareness of the issues to be addressed.
- Following a robust audit of provision, the school has carefully allocated its additional funding to promote sport. The schools leaders, including the governing body are aware of the impact of this funding, some of which has been used to increase the exercise being undertaken by pupils at risk of leading unhealthy lives.

### ■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors have considerable expertise that has been very valuable to the school; for instance, a governor has provided training for staff on effective special needs provision.
- Governors are clear about the role they play in ensuring that the school maintains high standards and continues to improve. They have an accurate view of pupils' attainment and the progress made by different groups.
- Governors have a secure grasp of the assessment information that is used to compare the school's performance against the national averages.
- Governors undertake extensive training to ensure that they have a detailed knowledge of the information related to the school's performance. The governing body has made appropriate arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding and is very well informed about how the money is used. It is holding leaders to account for ensuring that these pupils make better progress. In the recent past, the governors have successfully dealt with the underperformance of staff.
- Governors know how teachers' performance is managed to improve their practice. They ensure that only effective teaching is rewarded by pay and promotion. They know, and support, how senior leaders are tackling any remaining underperformance in teaching.

## 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>	138268
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426883

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Selina Graham
<b>Select</b>	John Newton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	N/A
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