

# Barrow Hill Junior School

Bridgeman Street, St John's Wood, London, NW8 7AL

**Inspection dates** 9–10 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The strong leadership of the headteacher and governors has created a dedicated and enthusiastic team. In just over a year this team has been successful in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' achievement is good. They make faster progress and their attainment is rising in reading and writing. Standards in all subjects, including mathematics, are now above the national average.
- The quality of teaching is typically good overall with examples of outstanding practice.
- Reading is taught well so that pupils quickly become fluent readers and develop a love of books.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above the national average.
- Pupils greatly enjoy school and have good attitudes to their learning and all aspects of school life. They behave well and are very aware of how to stay safe. The school provides a very caring and secure place to learn. pupils, parents and carers agree.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders check regularly on the quality of teaching. They give feedback and support that are helping staff to improve their teaching.
- Across the school, teamwork is a strength. Staff are united in their determination to ensure pupils achieve their potential.
- Pupils have many memorable experiences, including those in music, theatre and sport, which contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Occasionally, teaching does not challenge pupils appropriately, in particular those more-able pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Middle leaders are not involved enough in monitoring the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- The achievement of some of the most able pupils is not yet good enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons. Five of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils both informally and formally. They heard pupils read and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers, including the 23 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They also talked to several parents and carers before school and considered the views of staff expressed in 13 questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority's advisory service and the Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair. The inspectors held discussions with members of the senior and extended leadership teams.
- Inspectors examined pupils' progress information and the work of a group of pupils supported by the pupil premium. In addition, other school documentation, including the minutes of governing body meetings and information relating to targets set for teachers and safeguarding, was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Barrow Hill Junior School is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils belong to a minority ethnic group and approximately two thirds speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action are above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools for children in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals. In July 2013 the school was awarded the Mayor of London's Gold Club Award in recognition of its effective use of this funding.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2013, the deputy headteacher in April 2014 and the assistant headteacher in September 2014.

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

- Ensure teachers provide the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils in all lessons.
- Enable middle leaders to develop their skills in evaluating the quality of teaching in terms of its impact on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, including the more able pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with a clear vision. He is well supported by a new, committed senior leadership team, a close-knit staff and a skilled governing body. In a short period of time he has instilled a strong sense of ambition in the school. This has resulted in impressive improvements in 2014 in the standards that pupils attain by the end of Key Stage 2, especially in writing.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because leaders have not secured a high enough proportion of outstanding teaching across the school. They have not fully used the information they have about pupils' progress to ensure that those pupils supported by the pupil premium achieve as highly as their peers.
- The way the school judges its effectiveness and uses this information to prioritise areas for improvement is clear. Priorities are correct and leaders, including governors, check carefully and often to ensure that improvements have been made. This demonstrates the school's strong capacity for improvement.
- Recently appointed leaders and managers have a planned programme of professional development. There is already clear evidence of their impact in raising pupils' achievement, especially in writing. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses but do not play a sufficient part in monitoring pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching.
- Systems for managing teachers' performance are rigorous and effective. The targets set for teachers are based on the Teachers' Standards and the school's self-evaluation, and there is a strong focus on improving pupils' progress. Training is closely tied to the school's priorities for improvement.
- The broad and balanced curriculum meets the requirements of the new National Curriculum and is well matched to pupils' needs, promoting both good achievement and well-being. Literacy and numeracy are central to the topic-based approach. Subject leaders make sure teachers have the right skills and resources to meet the needs of pupils. Information about what is taught in the curriculum is shared with parents and carers on the school's website. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is supported well by the school's strong links with a broad range of arts and theatrical groups; there is an extensive range of visits and visitors and good quality, specialist teaching in music and Italian. The school promotes tolerance and respect for people of all faiths, cultures and lifestyles through a planned programme of assemblies. British values of democracy and responsibility are promoted through pupils' active involvement in the democratically elected school council.
- The school has used the primary school sports funding to improve the quality of the teaching of physical education. It has increased the opportunities for pupils to prepare for and take part in inter-school tournaments and updated its physical education equipment. The impact of the effectiveness of the provision is evident in pupils' increased levels of participation and success.
- The local authority provides light touch support mainly by checking the accuracy of the school's own judgements. The school has commissioned additional support which has been very effective in supporting it in raising standards in writing. It is developing stronger relationships with its feeder infant school to improve transition into Key Stage 2, and with outstanding local primary schools.
- Links with parents and carers are good and the vast majority are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.
- The school has robust safeguarding arrangements and all statutory requirements are met. Staff training in child protection is up to date and very thorough.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are ambitious and bring a wide range of relevant and useful skills to the school. They have developed a plan of action in order to hold themselves to account. They show a keen interest in the school's work and keep themselves very well informed as to how it is doing through regular and focused visits. Governors ensure that the school complies fully with

all requirements for safeguarding and child protection. Members attend appropriate training courses and have a very good understanding of data and how the school is performing compared to other schools nationally. This, together with their good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school, ensures that they can ask robust questions which challenge and hold the leadership team to account. They are aware of how the pupil premium has been spent and its impact on pupils' progress. They have set robust targets for the performance of the headteacher. Governors help to ensure that good decisions are made about allocating finances, including the pupil premium funding, and rewarding teachers appropriately for their work.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and get on well together. Their conduct around the school is exemplary and their attitudes to each other and to teachers and other staff are good. They treat their environment with respect and inspectors saw no evidence of litter.
- Pupils generally display a positive attitude in lessons. In several lessons pupils were observed working together very well and, in discussions, they were keen to share their knowledge and learn from each other.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because in some lessons they lose interest when work is not set at the right level and it is either too easy or too hard for them. Until recently, too many pupils did not take enough pride in their work and both writing and presentation were of poor quality. The school has introduced a new presentation policy which is beginning to have a positive impact.
- School records show that while a few pupils have difficulties with behaviour, the school's very thorough and supportive approach to behaviour management has helped them make good progress.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school ensures that e-safety is a very high priority. Parents and carers are very positive about how happy and safe their children are in school. The vast majority say that communication between school and home is very effective and has improved since the headteacher took up his post. They welcome the fact that he is at the gate to greet them every day. Leaders ensure that the site is very secure and all staff are rigorously checked for their suitability.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they have the opportunity to explore how to stay safe in many situations, including when using new technologies. They understand the different kinds of bullying very well but insist that it is rare at school. School records support this and also confirm that any bullying is effectively followed up and dealt with.
- Pupils' attendance was broadly average at the time of the last inspection. Due to a rigorous effort by the school, it is now above average. There are few pupils who are persistent absentees.
- The school's promotion of pupils' personal and social development is having a positive impact on their attainment and their growth into responsible and caring members of society. They have excellent opportunities to take responsibility which include becoming a member of the school council, being a playground friend (Worry Wiper), raising money for charity and representing the school at tournaments and events.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Pupils' books and rates of progress show that teaching is typically good and continuing to improve.
- Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and feel that they are taught well. They are keen to learn and usually work hard. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils were learning about how authors develop a setting, the activities sustained their interest throughout the lesson. They

enjoyed the challenge and were eager to answer questions and contribute to their learning. Consequently they made good progress.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They give clear explanations which enable pupils to start work quickly.
- The sharpness of teachers' questioning makes pupils think and learn well because they have time to share and develop their ideas. In most classes, tasks capture pupils' imagination and sustain interest so that learning is enjoyable and effective.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and well trained. They play a valuable and effective role in pupils' learning, particularly that of lower-ability pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, which enables all these groups to make at least good progress.
- Evidence from observations and work in pupils' books indicates that work is not always planned to ensure that pupils have enough challenge. This is especially the case for the more able pupils. Sometimes teachers only expect these pupils to produce a greater quantity of work rather than tackle harder tasks that will enable them to use the knowledge and skills they have learnt. Often, when pupils are working in ability sets, all pupils are set the same work.
- The school sets a range of homework tasks and pupils are expected to complete them. Parents and carers agree that appropriate homework is set for the age of the pupils.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved over time. Pupils are given guidance on how they can improve their work, are expected to respond to the advice and are usually given the time to do so.

### **The achievement of pupils is good**

- Pupils' work scrutinised during the inspection and the school's progress data confirm that most pupils achieve well from their various starting points.
- The attainment of Year 6 pupils who left school in 2013 was above the national average in reading, well above it in mathematics but below it in writing. This represents a slight decline from the 2012 results. School data show that in the most recent national tests, pupils' attainment has improved with a greater proportion attaining the higher levels in all subjects.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is outstanding and improving. School data show that all of the Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2014 attained the expected level, just under two thirds attained Level 5 and almost a third, Level 6, the highest level of all.
- As a result of very effective strategies, pupils' attainment in writing also improved significantly in 2014. Almost all of the Year 6 pupils who left in 2014 attained the expected level and two fifths attained Level 5.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is above the national average with more pupils than ever attaining the higher levels. This reflects the greater emphasis put on reading across all subjects and the investment in improved resources. Younger pupils demonstrated that they could read with good understanding while older pupils spoke enthusiastically about different authors and clearly read widely. The school ensures that those pupils who do not have the opportunity to read regularly outside of school are well supported in school.
- The most able pupils are making faster progress, and their attainment is rising, because increasingly teachers have higher expectations of them. This is especially the case in mathematics. However, pupils' overall achievement is not yet outstanding because the progress of the most able pupils is not consistent throughout the school with some groups less likely to achieve the higher levels than others. This is particularly the case for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school actively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. Pupils identified as requiring extra help with their work are effectively supported. Consequently, most disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress and fulfil their potential.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide extra staffing. The impact of this can be seen in the improving standards achieved by eligible pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2013 their

attainment in writing was nine months behind that of others in the school. School data show an improving picture in 2014 but these pupils are still less likely to attain the higher levels.

## 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>	101107
<b>Local authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	448208

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Bates
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Tomlinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23–24 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7641 5005
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