

Barden Primary School

Burnley Campus, Burnley, Lancashire, BB10 1JD

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The drive and ambition of the headteacher is supported fully by the very effective leadership team and purposeful governing body. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly and the quality of teaching improving strongly.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are thoughtful, extremely well mannered and take great pride in their school and in their work.
- Pupils feel very safe at school because of the excellent way they are looked after. Leaders place the greatest importance on knowing every pupil well. They implement robust systems to keep all pupils safe.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations. Teaching assistants and other support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They agree that the care and welfare of all pupils are strengths of the school.
- Pupils benefit from a lively curriculum. They enjoy the well-planned topics and benefit from school trips that inspire new subject knowledge.
- Children settle quickly and get off to a good start in the Reception classes. They make good progress towards acquiring the essential skills for the next stage of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils, especially the most able, do not move on quickly enough to more challenging work in lessons, particularly in mathematics. This limits their progress.
- Pupils do not often use their own initiative in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons taught by 15 teachers and listened to pupils reading. An assembly was also observed.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, four members of the governing body, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority. They also talked informally with pupils in the dining room and on the playground.
- Documents reviewed include: the school's own information about pupils' progress, plans for school improvement, the monitoring of learning and teachers' performance, organisation of the curriculum, safeguarding information, the use of pupil premium funding and the minutes of governing body meetings and committee meetings. In addition, the school's website was scrutinised.
- Inspectors also took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), results of the school's own consultations with parents and discussions with parents before school.

Inspection team

Adrian Francis, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Martin	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average. The term disadvantaged is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for those children who are looked after by the local authority and are eligible for the pupil premium. This proportion has risen slightly over the past three years.
- The proportion of pupils from non-White British families is much higher than average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is well-above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body, operates every school day for pupils who attend this school.
- The school shares a building, grounds and facilities with a nursery school, a children's centre, a special school, a sixth form, a faith centre and a public library. These provisions are subject to separate inspections and their reports may be viewed at www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- Early years provision is full time in the Reception classes.
- The school has gained several awards including the Lancashire Race Equality Mark and Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement further by:
 - increasing the level of challenge in lessons, particularly for the most able, so that greater proportions reach the highest levels of attainment, particularly in mathematics
 - enabling pupils to use more often their initiative in applying their knowledge, skills and understanding to real-life situations.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led and managed because the headteacher has established a clear vision and a strong sense of purpose. In partnership with the deputy headteacher and senior staff team, they set high expectations for other staff and pupils. Morale is high and staff strive to improve the quality of education provided in classrooms.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance, recognising both its strengths and weaknesses. Their determination to improve standards and the learning for all pupils is shared by staff. Responses to parent questionnaires are highly positive, with parents proud that their children attend Barden Primary. They strongly recommend the school to other families.
- Senior leaders have improved the way they gather pupils' assessment data since the last inspection. This has been a key aspect in linking the quality of teaching to improving achievement across the school. Middle leaders are also knowledgeable about the progress of individual pupils and that of different groups of pupils. They scrutinise pupils' work books to check if standards are continuing to improve as a result of accelerating progress.
- Leadership of teaching is effective. Procedures to manage teachers' performance are very thorough. Teachers are accountable for the progress made by their pupils. Goals are set for individual teachers and progress against these is checked closely by leaders. As a result, rates of progress for the vast majority of pupils have improved.
- School leaders are well informed about the performance of each class. Differences in the quality of teaching across the school result in some variations in the amount of progress made by pupils in different classes, particularly in mathematics. Leaders have begun to take decisive action to ensure greater consistency.
- The school's leadership and management have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The collective desire to ensure that all pupils have the very best opportunities to succeed is very strong and all staff play their part. As a result, pupils' behaviour is outstanding.
- The way the pupil premium funding has been used has proved successful in boosting the progress of pupils eligible for this support. Any gaps in learning between these pupils and others in school and nationally are closing. Additional adults are deployed effectively where more support is needed.
- Safeguarding procedures, including child protection, meet current requirements. This is a strength of the school because of the extremely effective practice in the day-to-day management and care of pupils.
- Pupils enjoy a rich and exciting curriculum, which supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is beginning to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The approach to topics, which ensures all pupils have opportunities to go on visits, inspires pupils to participate enthusiastically and to talk knowledgeably about their different topics.
- The school has reviewed both its curriculum and assessment arrangements in the light of the changes in the new National Curriculum. It is currently considering ways of moving to a chosen new system of assessing pupils' progress as a result.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The extra funding for sports in primary schools has been used well to provide additional training for staff and for encouraging more pupils to participate in sports. The range of sports on offer has increased and pupils say that they really enjoy the fact that they have such a wide choice.
- The local authority provides light-touch support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good and accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Members of the governing body have highly relevant skills to challenge and support the school. They are committed to driving improvements forward. Governors have a clear insight into the quality of education provided through regular visits, including observing lessons and discussing pupils' progress with members of staff. They know how well pupils are achieving when compared to pupils nationally and they have a clear understanding of the progress of groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and eligible for support through additional funding.
 - Governors challenge effectively the headteacher and other senior staff and hold them to account for the standards pupils reach. The headteacher ensures that governors are well informed about school data and the quality of teaching. Governors understand fully that the quality of teaching is linked to increases in pay and support the effective approach to tackling underperformance.
 - Governors know how the additional funding for sports is spent in order to improve the teaching of

physical education and know that this is being monitored for its impact on improving teachers' skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils respond exceptionally well to the school's expectations of how they relate to each other; relationships between pupils and with adults are excellent. Pupils demonstrate outstanding courtesy and display impeccable manners.
- Parents spoke very positively about the welcome, care and approach offered by the school staff. As one parent said 'My child loves school so much. The staff are always there when you want them.'
- Pupils come to school eager to learn and get down to work immediately. They are extremely keen to take part in all activities and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils are very conscientious in their approach to their work, concentrate hard on the tasks given and are keen to complete them to the best of their ability. They speak with tremendous pride about their school.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are happy and sociable occasions. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils move around the corridors in a quiet and purposeful way. In assemblies, pupils pay close attention to the speakers and are very sensible in joining in with reflections with the utmost respect.
- Detailed behaviour records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and there are no exclusions of any kind. Pupils know the school rules really well and abide by them. There was no need for any application of the school's sanctions seen during the inspection.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. There are comprehensive checks on the suitability of adults to work with children and the school provides an extremely welcoming, safe and caring environment in which pupils learn.
- Instances of bullying are very rare and are acted upon quickly and effectively, so that incidents do not recur. Other cases such as, for example, homophobic name calling, are equally rare. Staff take these kinds of incidents very seriously, always explaining why actions are unacceptable. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet and learn about how to deal with online bullying.
- As a result of the school's thorough actions to protect them, pupils' awareness of safety is strong and they feel totally safe in school.
- Attendance has improved markedly since the last inspection and is now above the national average.
- The school takes part in a wide range of activities in the local area and local schools' community, and the school's reputation among parents is of the highest order.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching and classroom support is good, with pupils being highly motivated in lessons and learning a wide range of new skills. The good progress that the large majority of pupils now make and the range of high-quality work in books provide clear evidence that, over time, the quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it effectively, particularly in the teaching of writing. For example, Year 6 pupils responded very positively to the planning of a story that was the culmination of their week's work.
- Pupils draw inspiration from exciting activities when they achieve most success. An example of this is when Year 2 pupils became totally absorbed in producing pictures in the style of the famous artists, Monet and Pollock. Each group had clear criteria to follow and achievement levels were high.
- At times, across the school, the most is not always made of pupils' excellent attitudes to their learning. Therefore, pupils do not always progress as rapidly as they could. Pupils do not use their own initiative often enough in their learning and tackle investigations that allow them to apply their learning to real-life situations.
- The teaching of writing is a strength across the school and this is reflected in the high-quality work in pupils' books and on displays around the school. This is typified by very neat work, excellent presentation and high levels of care and pride. The teaching of mathematics is not as strong in its impact on pupils' progress although it is now developing well. Teachers do not always set high enough expectations for pupils to make the good rate of progress they should. This is particularly the case with the most able

pupils.

- Pupils' work is marked regularly. Leaders have improved teachers' marking of pupils' work through the introduction of a whole-school approach so pupils know what their next steps in learning are. This stronger feature in pupils' writing books. These points are often used well by pupils during their learning in lessons. Pupils usually respond to these comments and correct the mistakes in their writing but this is not developed as well in mathematics.
- Pupils usually have a good understanding of what they are achieving in each lesson through clear guidance they receive about how to know if they have been successful. For example, pupils respond well when given clear criteria of what to include in their writing, and this guides them well. Pupils' learning improves in response to frequent checks on their progress.
- Although teachers' lesson plans show attention to providing tasks that are suitable for different abilities, the learning the pupils undertake is sometimes too similar and not difficult enough. At times, some of the most able pupils repeat work they can already do, and this slows their progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils usually start in Key Stage 1 with skills that are below average and make good progress as they move through Key Stage 1. End of Key Stage 1 standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen steadily over the past five years and are now broadly in line with the national average.
- Pupils in Year 6 in 2014 had lower starting points at the end of Year 2 than other year groups in the school. In 2014, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards overall were broadly average in writing but lower than average overall and in reading and mathematics. The proportions of pupils who attained at the higher Level 5 were below average, other than in writing.
- School records and pupils' work in classes throughout the school now show that pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make at least good progress in writing. They write neatly and take a pride in their handwriting. Spelling and punctuation are increasingly accurate. By Year 6, pupils often write at length for a wide range of purposes, such as diaries, biographies and imaginative stories in many different subjects. Occasionally, pupils are not as creative and productive as they should be in applying their writing to real-life situations.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. They are increasingly confident in their ability with number and with the basic concepts but have too few opportunities to tackle investigations and to apply their knowledge and skills in different situations.
- The results of the most recent national screening check at the end of Year 1 on pupils' knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters represent in words) were average. During the inspection, pupils used their phonic knowledge well to read and spell unfamiliar words. Pupils throughout the school demonstrated a love of reading, strongly supported by the excellent school library which is used regularly for a range of reading activities and events.
- Disadvantaged pupils have made varying rates of progress across the school in the past. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013, they performed around two terms behind their other classmates in the combined result for reading, writing and mathematics. They were under-performing when compared with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, by a little over two terms overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The concerted efforts of staff over the past year have closed the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others across the school in reading, writing and mathematics so that in 2014 there was little difference between the attainment of these groups. As a result, these pupils are generally making better rates of progress than others in school and nationally. Unvalidated data indicate that the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, both in school and other pupils nationally continue to narrow. This has been achieved through the imaginative use of funding and individual and small-group help and support that is focused well on helping pupils to learn.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs of all ages make good progress from their starting points. Effective support is planned and organised by the school's leadership, with the majority being implemented by skilled and well-deployed support staff.
- The most able pupils make good progress. However, some of the most able pupils do not always achieve the exceptionally high standards that they should. This is because teachers' guidance and the work given to the most able pupils does not always recognise their higher starting points in learning. These pupils do not always manage their own work, tackle hard enough tasks or support others in their learning.

The early years provision is good

- Children usually join the Reception classes with skills and understanding that are below the levels typical for their age; in a small proportion, significantly so. Effective transition from their pre-school experiences ensures that children settle very quickly. The early years' leader provides clear direction as to what needs to be done to ensure the progress children make continues to improve. Staff are trained well and very effective systems are in place to ensure that children are safe.
- Children learn well and make good progress from their individual starting points as a result of the consistently good teaching. In a happy environment, children behave well. They adopt quickly high levels of independence when they choose what they are going to do and explain what they have learned. Their communication skills, which are often limited when they start school, improve rapidly because of many opportunities to discuss their ideas. Children learn to cooperate with others, for example, in role play activities. Any lapses in cooperation are quickly resolved because staff expect good behaviour at all times.
- Children who enter school at significantly below typical levels make good progress and catch up quickly with their peers.
- Children concentrate well when taught in adult-led groups or when working on their own. As a result, children of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, are supported well and make similar, good rates of progress.
- Children known to be eligible for additional funding achieve well. They are identified early and planning is put in place to support their needs so that they participate fully in the wide range of stimulating activities provided.
- Good routines agreed across the setting ensure that children understand what is expected of them from an early age. The learning environment is extremely well planned and offers a range of interesting and stimulating activities, both inside and in the excellent outdoor area. Children can choose activities which interest them, such as playing in the builders' yard, and they cooperate extremely well together. This gives them plenty of opportunities to develop their language, communication and social skills.
- Children are well cared for and kept safe. They display positive behaviour and develop good self-control. They learn quickly to share, take turns and work together with their classmates. The classrooms offer an atmosphere which is warm and friendly and this is supported by the high-quality relationships between the children and the highly effective staff team.
- The sense of partnership the school fosters between staff and parents establishes very good links between home and school. In particular, parents are given plenty of advice about how to help their children learn at home, as well as many invitations to share in areas of school life.

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	119260
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	448905

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	A Anwar
Headteacher	Simon Smalley
Date of previous school inspection	21 April 2010
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