

# Barming Primary School

Belmont Close, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 9DY

## Inspection dates

22–23 January 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Requires Improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school's performance has declined since its previous inspection. Governors have not been sufficiently diligent in holding senior leaders to account for pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Subject leaders have not been successful enough in improving achievement or teaching in mathematics and English, especially in reading. The headteacher does not manage teachers' performance with sufficient rigour.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least expected progress. Pupils do not make enough progress from the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, their results do not compare well with national standards, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers are widening in reading in Years 1 to 5.
- Teachers do not make sufficiently effective use of information about pupils' achievement to plan suitably challenging work for all. As a result, the progress of different groups, including the most able, is inadequate. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are often too low.
- Teachers' marking and feedback on pupils' work do not regularly give clear guidance about how pupils can improve.
- Pupils do not behave as well as they should. They are occasionally prone to waste time and some fail to concentrate in lessons, or follow the teachers' instructions. Consequently, behaviour requires improvement.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. The school addressed some, but not all, safeguarding concerns raised by inspectors. Levels of adult supervision at playtimes are not always high enough to prevent accidents. Not all pupils know enough about the importance of not using derogatory language.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is typically stronger in the early years than the rest of the school. As a result, children move into Year 1 well prepared, especially in their phonics skills (the sounds that letters make).
- The well-led and managed breakfast club provides a calm, supportive start to the school day.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 achieve well, especially in reading and writing. Gaps between their achievement and that of their peers in school and nationally have closed.
- Pupils are usually polite, friendly and confident.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 22 lessons or parts of lessons, including several shared observations with senior leaders. Inspectors made a number of short visits to see small groups of pupils working with other adults in and out of the classroom. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read, and scrutinised a large number of their workbooks. Inspectors visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body and a local authority representative. Discussions took place with a group of Year 6 pupils to seek their views and with other pupils during break times.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of school documents. These included the school’s evaluation of its own effectiveness, its development plan and records of achievement. Inspectors analysed behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and accident records. They considered governing body documents and documents relating to the management of teachers’ performance.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 102 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, together with the views of two parents who expressed their views by telephone. One parent wrote a letter to the inspectors. Inspectors considered the views expressed in 18 questionnaires returned by school staff.

Inspection team

Angela Konarzewski, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Meades	Additional Inspector
Janet Sharp	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- Barming Primary School is larger than most primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- Children attend full time in Reception from when they first start in September.
- The school has a breakfast club that is run by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Rapidly improve teaching and accelerate progress across the school in English and mathematics, especially in reading, for all pupils, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the most able
  - improving teachers' ability to check each pupil's level of understanding accurately
  - setting work that is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and providing sufficient support and challenge
  - ensuring that teachers' guidance consistently helps pupils to improve, and checking regularly that pupils act on the advice given
  - making sure that all staff teach reading consistently well and provide pupils with books that are neither too hard nor too easy for them to read
  - ensuring that teaching assistants contribute consistently well to pupils' learning
  - ensuring that pupils concentrate well in all lessons and follow teachers' instructions promptly
  - ensuring that pupils consistently present their work well in their books.
- Improve safeguarding arrangements within the school by ensuring that:
  - leaders regularly check site safety and security and take swift action when weaknesses are identified
  - there are suitable levels of staff supervision outside at playtimes
  - pupils are given clear and effective messages about the inappropriateness of derogatory language.
- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that governors act upon the recommendations of their recent review and hold senior leaders more rigorously to account for the quality of teaching, safeguarding and achievement in the school
  - developing the effectiveness of subject leaders so they are better able to take actions to improve achievement and teaching
  - establishing a robust system to evaluate the impact of additional funding on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils across the school, especially in reading, and of the sports premium.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved. A review of the effectiveness of governance has already been commissioned.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- The school has not improved rapidly enough since its previous inspection. The school is providing an inadequate standard of education, and the headteacher, leaders and managers are unable to demonstrate the capacity to secure further improvement. The school's own evaluation of its overall effectiveness is too generous.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are inadequate. They do not meet statutory requirements. The checks, which leaders carry out, are not sufficiently robust to identify issues and take appropriate actions to ensure the school is a safe and secure place to learn. During the inspection, leaders acted to rectify some, but not all, of the safeguarding concerns raised relating to site safety and security.
- Senior leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and on actions to improve learning are not rigorous enough. Systems to check pupils' individual progress over time have not been sufficiently thorough to identify those pupils who are falling behind. As a result, leaders have not ensured that teachers always cater well for pupils of all abilities, especially disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the most able. Consequently, the school is not effectively promoting opportunities for all pupils to learn equally well.
- Leaders have not used additional funding well to tackle weaknesses in key aspects of disadvantaged pupils' learning. Achievement in reading for these pupils is markedly lower than that in writing and mathematics in all year groups except Year 6. However, leaders allocated additional funding mainly to improving their achievement in mathematics, rather than in reading where it was most needed.
- Subject (middle) leaders are aware of underachievement and weaknesses in teaching. However, senior leaders have not given them sufficient support or time in which to develop their skills to accurately check, evaluate and improve the school's work. Consequently, their contribution to school improvement is much too limited.
- The range of subjects taught in the school (curriculum) is broad and balanced and provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well mannered, courteous and confident and they know the difference between right and wrong. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain. However, leaders are not doing enough to make sure that the quality of what is on offer in all subjects, especially reading, is good enough. This leads to underachievement.
- Pupils and parents have ample opportunities to contribute to the running of the school via 'suggestion boxes'. Pupils report that the school takes their suggestions into account and implements them where possible. In contrast, some of the parents who responded on Parent View feel the school does not address their concerns well.
- The school uses sports funding to provide specialist training for staff and sports coaching. Inspectors were not able to determine whether this is successful in raising participation in sport or increasing fitness. This is because leaders have not checked to judge if the funding is being spent as well as it could be.
- The local authority has been supporting the school since its previous inspection two years ago. Until recently, it has not acted with sufficient resolve to tackle the problems facing the school. The local authority deployed a new school improvement adviser to the school from December. He is now actively seeking to support governors with ensuring rapid improvement in the quality of leadership and management.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have not held senior leaders to account with sufficient rigour. They have too readily accepted information on teaching and achievement presented to them, without questioning or challenging the school. As a result, they have not properly addressed weaknesses in teaching and achievement, as well as in leadership and management, previously identified. For example, they did not check whether leaders correctly prioritised the use of additional funds or whether disadvantaged pupils across the school made sufficient progress in all aspects of learning. They have not yet had time to put recommendations into place arising from the recent review of governors' effectiveness.
- Governors now know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know that pupils' progress is inadequate and are aware of the urgent need to maintain a strong focus on teaching in order to secure better outcomes for pupils. They have knowledge of weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school and have recently sought the support of the local authority to address this. They understand how pay and promotion are linked to staff performance. They have not held leaders sufficiently to account for the safeguarding of pupils through, for example, its policies and procedures. They have not

effectively promoted equal opportunities for pupils of different abilities. However, the governing body promotes good relationships within the community and is aware of its responsibilities to tackle any discrimination.

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

**are inadequate**

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils do not behave well in all classes or subjects. Some pupils are slow to respond to their teachers' instructions and waste time instead of doing their best. Behaviour improves where work is interesting, engaging and well matched to pupils' abilities and needs.
- Inspectors found that pupils are usually well mannered, polite and courteous towards each other, and towards adults, including visitors.
- In some classes, where expectations of presentation are high, pupils take pride in their work. This is not consistently the case and some workbooks, especially in Years 3 and 4, provide evidence of low expectations of presentation and handwriting. Around the school, pupils take a pride in their surroundings. The environment inside and outside is clean, tidy and litter-free.
- Pupils' attendance is average. There is a slight improvement since last year because leaders have not been authorising all holiday absence and have imposed fines, where appropriate.
- The breakfast club is very well run. It provides pupils with a supportive and caring environment which they enjoy attending and where they behave exceptionally well.

#### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. Inspectors found that there were weaknesses in the security of the school and school site. The school addressed two examples of these during the inspection. Checks on the suitability of staff to work in school are in place.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and those parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed with them. However, the school's records show that a significant number of accidents take place on the playground as a result of 'rough play'. The school has yet to take actions to address any weaknesses in supervision at play times.
- Pupils have a good awareness of e-safety and know that they must report incidents of cyber-bullying. They know adults will deal with such situations.
- Pupils report that there is very little bullying or racism in the school. Any incidents are usually dealt with appropriately. However, the school's work to tackle some forms of bullying is less effective. Pupils confirmed that they heard others use the words 'gay' or 'gaylord' as derogatory terms and that they had not been taught about homophobic bullying.

### **The quality of teaching**

**is inadequate**

- Weak teaching of reading, writing and mathematics over time has resulted in a legacy of underachievement by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6.
- Where teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan work that appropriately challenges pupils of different levels of ability, they make good progress. However, this is not consistently the case. The work set for too many pupils, including in literacy and mathematics lessons, does not match their levels of ability. In particular, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, the most able and disadvantaged pupils in reading do not receive work that enables them to achieve well.
- The teaching of reading is inadequate. Over time, weaknesses in the teaching of reading have led to poor progress. In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teachers give books to some pupils to read that are too hard for them. Teaching of phonics is not good enough. While there are strengths in Reception and in some Year 1 groups, the teaching of phonics is too variable across the rest of the school.
- Teachers' marking and guidance vary in quality. Too often, they are not effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Pupils do not have sufficient time to make the necessary improvements and teachers do not check regularly to make sure they have done so. As a result, progress slows and mistakes and misconceptions remain untackled. Where marking is consistently thorough pupils make better progress. In these instances, pupils are given good advice on how to improve their work as well as opportunities to act upon teachers' comments.
- Many teachers lack the ability to accurately assess the level at which pupils are working. Their judgements

of pupils' attainment are frequently inaccurate. Numerous discrepancies identified by inspectors between the levels awarded by teachers, work in books and pupils' test results in Year 6 demonstrate this.

- Teachers work in partnership with their teaching assistants to provide additional support for pupils. While some teaching assistants promote learning effectively through their good questioning skills this is not always the case, hindering progress.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **is inadequate**

- Pupils' achievement over time is inadequate in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have not tackled weaknesses in the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour to address pupils' underachievement.
- Although standards at the end of Year 6 rose from 2012 to 2014, they remained below the national average in reading and mathematics in 2014. The progress of Year 6 pupils in 2014 from their starting points at the end of Year 2 was significantly below the national average, especially in reading.
- Pupils currently in Year 2 are not working at as high a level as those in 2014. This represents slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, the school's current data show that many pupils in Year 6 have not moved on since the end of Year 5 and that some have slipped back. Progress is variable across the rest of Key Stage 2, with too many pupils not moving on quickly enough.
- Attainment of the most able Year 6 pupils was below the national average in reading in 2014, average in mathematics and above average in writing. Current work in pupils' books and school tests do not support the teachers' estimates of the levels that the most able pupils will attain in national tests in 2015.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the 2014 national tests was above average. These pupils were three months ahead in reading, eight months in writing and a month in mathematics.
- Additional funding provides two additional teachers who teach small groups and individuals. This provision is proving effective in reducing the gap between the attainment of these pupils and their peers in writing and mathematics throughout the school and also in reading in Year 6. However, across the rest of the school, disadvantaged pupils are not achieving as well as their peers in reading and gaps are widening in some year groups. This is because leaders have not identified reading as a priority.
- Over time, the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been less than that of their peers in the school. The work teachers set is often too hard or does not challenge them sufficiently. Expectations are not high enough for these pupils and, as a result, the standards they attain are below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps are widening year-on-year so that, by the end of Year 6, their achievement is inadequate.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Provision in the early years requires improvement because leaders and managers are not always sufficiently rigorous in checking that children are kept safe.
- However, the quality of teaching and the achievement of children is stronger in the early years than it is in the rest of the school. Consequently, children behave and achieve well.
- Children begin school in the Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. They progress well across the year, especially in their reading and writing skills, their understanding of number, and in their personal and social development. This prepares them well for Year 1.
- Children settle quickly and are happy, secure and keen to learn because staff are very caring and establish highly positive relationships with them. They behave well because they feel valued. Evidence for this is seen in the large amount of good quality children's work that is on display. Well-established routines, and clear labelling on all equipment and activities, ensure children know what to do in teacher-led activities. These strategies also help when children have a free choice of whether to learn and play indoors or outside.
- The topic that provided the context for learning during the inspection was 'The Frozen World'. This subject stimulated the children's interest in penguins and polar bears, snowflakes and ice. An igloo provided an exciting play home in the role-play area in both classrooms.
- Well-organised activities, effectively used resources and carefully checked children's progress are features of the good teaching of early years. The leader is knowledgeable about good early years practice and she supports her staff well. She checks children's progress thoroughly, analyses this information and takes prompt action to address any weaknesses. For example, she has identified that boys are not making as rapid progress in writing as girls because of weaknesses in their 'moving and handling' skills. In response, staff are now planning better opportunities indoors and outside, to encourage writing and improve boys' skills.

- Good links with pre-schools ensure that staff know the children well when they start school in Reception.
- High quality 'learning diaries' provide parents with detailed information on their child's progress in photographs, samples of work and annotations. Parents have opportunities to contribute to these diaries, recording children's achievements at home. These, together with the school's similar format 'learning journals', provide a rich tapestry of each child's development across the Reception year.

## 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>	118508
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	453640

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Adams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robin Halls
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 726472
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