

Barling Magna Community Primary School

Little Wakering Road, Southend-on-Sea SS3 0LN

Inspection dates

28–29 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have been too slow in taking action and making the necessary changes since the last inspection. The progress that pupils make remains too varied in and between year groups.
- The governors do not hold senior leaders to account well enough for the progress that pupils make. They rely too heavily on the support of external partners, such as the local authority, to ensure school improvement.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 fluctuate too widely year on year. Pupils do not make enough progress in their learning in lower key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. They have too much to catch up on in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunity to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teachers too readily accept work that is not presented well enough.
- The misbehaviour of pupils in one class is not well managed. This disrupts the lessons so that others cannot concentrate on their work.
- There are insufficient opportunities provided in early years for children to secure their knowledge, understanding and skills in the basics of writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress in key stage 1, particularly in writing and mathematics. Teaching does not provide enough challenge for these pupils to excel.
- Reading is not taught well enough. Pupils are not consistently supported by adults in developing their skills. Support provided to pupils is not in line with the school policy and expectations.
- Leaders do not check on the quality of learning well enough. They focus on what the teacher is doing rather than on the progress pupils are making. As a result, leaders have an over-generous view of the school's effectiveness.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are happy and safe. They are well cared for in a warm and friendly environment.
- The phonics lessons have greatly improved. Pupils have achieved well again this year in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- This year, the teaching of the older pupils in Year 6 is a strength. The outcomes for Year 6 pupils are on track to be higher than last year.
- Sports funding is used well. Pupils are provided with good-quality sports coaching and activities.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of pupils by ensuring that:
 - pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are developed consistently well through the school, so that all ability groups make at least good progress from their starting points
 - teachers consistently have high expectations of pupils' conduct so that pupils develop positive attitudes to learning throughout the school
 - teachers insist on and model the highest presentation of work
 - in key stage 1, pupils develop at the same rate as they did in the early years.
- Rapidly improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunity to deepen their understanding of mathematics by using and applying their knowledge and skills in a range of different ways, including in the early years
 - ensuring that adults adhere to the school policy to listen to young pupils read regularly
 - using time efficiently in reading lessons to focus on developing skills and understanding.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors perform their statutory duties of holding the school to account and rigorously check the accuracy of the information they receive from school leaders
 - ensuring that actions are swift and focused on raising achievement for all pupils as they move through the school
 - sharpening improvement plans so they focus on consistency in approaches across the school and on improving sustainable outcomes for pupils
 - training middle leaders to share information with teachers and effectively monitor the quality of learning in their subjects.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium (additional government funding) should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how the impact of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have been slow to make changes in the school and have failed to secure sufficient, sustained improvement. The actions taken by senior leaders to improve teaching, learning and assessment have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. The achievement of too many pupils is inadequate.
- The capacity of school leaders to make further improvement is fragile. Leaders and governors are heavily reliant on the external support they receive from the local authority for the progress the school makes. The strategic interim board, which is also responsible for making decisions on finance and personnel, was in place at the last inspection and currently the local authority has no plans to remove it. The local authority has sent a formal letter of concern to the school. The school has also received a warning letter about low pupil standards from the Department for Education.
- Leaders have an over-generous view of the quality of pupils' learning. This is because they focus too heavily on what the adults are doing in class rather than the provision for the pupils. Consequently, in some classes, pupils are provided with work that does not challenge them sufficiently well to help them make better progress.
- Leaders of English and mathematics have not had enough time allocated to monitoring the effectiveness of their subjects. Consequently, improvements in teaching, learning and assessment are too slow in some year groups. Pupils' results fluctuate too much year on year. The leadership of mathematics is not as effective as it could be. Although some staff have received training, their expertise is not shared widely enough so that all teachers benefit and develop new skills.
- The headteacher carries out performance management in line with expectations and sets targets. However, the assessment of performance is too positive at the final review when targets have been partially or, at times, not met. Some targets for staff are not specific enough, while others are unrealistic.
- At the last inspection, subject leaders were asked to ensure that pupils know how well they are doing in their subject area. They have not done this well enough, as they do not have the time to do this effectively. Science has no subject leader to improve this core area. Subject leaders have enthusiasm for their areas of responsibility and possess a clear desire to be even more effective. In PE, subject leadership is effective.
- Leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requires improvement. This is because the leader has not been trained sufficiently to have the necessary understanding of how to use information about these pupils to provide appropriate provision. Consequently, the support these pupils receive is not linked carefully enough to the progress they make. However, pupils are well cared for.
- The school curriculum does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects such as science and history. Insufficient time is spent in lessons developing the subject-specific skills, such as carrying out experiments in science.
- Leaders are committed to securing equal opportunities for pupils. However, the progress of the small proportion of pupils who are in receipt of pupil premium funding fluctuates each year. This is because leaders do not provide a rationale for how they allocate the funds. They do not analyse the impact of their spending adequately enough.
- The sports premium funding is used effectively to ensure that pupils participate regularly in high-quality sporting activities. Pupils receive coaching at lunchtimes and during their lessons so that they gain skills and enjoy teamwork. Consequently, pupils are keen to participate in local competitions with other schools.
- There is little evidence to demonstrate the promotion of British values currently within the curriculum, though pupils naturally demonstrate many of the values. Assemblies provide pupils with the opportunity to reflect on values such as respect and to celebrate the successes of others. During the inspection, pupils were considering the feelings of others when they have lost at a sporting event. Pupils demonstrated care and consideration when describing feelings and showed positive relationships with each other.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are not effective in holding school leaders to account for the quality of education. Governors have not ensured that leaders have taken appropriate actions to secure improvements in the areas identified at the previous inspection. Consequently, the pace of change is too slow.

- Governors are committed to the success of the school, but recognises that additional capacity is required to be more effective. Governors acknowledge that progress is still slow.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are secure. The checks on new staff at the school are made and records are well kept to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. Plans are in place for staff to receive the 'Prevent' duty training; other safeguarding training is in place. The governors regularly check the safeguarding processes and procedures to assure themselves that safeguarding is effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Although the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving, there are still areas across the school where it is not good enough. In Year 6, better teaching is leading to improved outcomes for pupils. However, pupils also have gaps in their knowledge that are not picked up and addressed by teachers, particularly lower down in the school.
- The teaching of reading is not effective enough. This is because the time is not used as well as possible for pupils to develop their skills of inference and their enjoyment of reading. Even though phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) lessons have improved, some younger pupils who require additional support to develop their early reading skills are not routinely listened to. This slows down the progress they can make. Consequently for 2016, school leaders anticipate that the results in the phonics screening check will be lower than in previous years.
- In key stage 1, teachers do not provide most-able pupils with enough targeted opportunities for them to excel. For example, although all pupils in key stage 1 are writing regularly, the progress that the most able pupils are making in handwriting, grammar and spelling is not as evident in their books. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, too few pupils demonstrate specific skills and abilities at a greater depth, particularly in writing and mathematics, given their strong starting points
- Although teachers regularly record information on how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics, this is not accurate in some classes. Senior leaders use this information to track the progress of pupils. However, the quality of work in pupils' books does not match the rates of progress reported by teachers. This is particularly true in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. Teachers are not routinely using assessment information to help them to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, or to help pupils practise and master key skills.
- Younger pupils are provided with opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in a wide range of ways. In one lesson seen, pupils were enjoying their mathematical games set out in the hall. The creative planning and approaches of the teacher ensured that pupils grappled with numbers and used their reasoning skills effectively to add, subtract and start to divide. They were growing in confidence and skills as a result.
- The teaching of writing is improving in some classes. Older pupils are given more opportunity to write at length, edit and redraft their work, which helps them understand how to make progress. Some teachers are increasingly using subject-specific language when they speak with pupils to improve their vocabulary and written work. However, pupils' ability to use these words themselves is still not secure. For example, some pupils struggled to explain what an adjective or an adverb meant to inspectors, particularly in key stage 1, where this is a requirement of the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants, in most lessons, work effectively with teachers to support the learning of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Until recently, pupils have not been encouraged to take enough care and pride in their work. In some classes, teachers have encouraged good habits and personal pride. In others, the books and handwriting are messy.
- Pupils feel that their school is a safe place in which to learn. They know who to speak to if they are concerned and pupils are confident that an adult will help them. The vast majority of parents spoken to told inspectors that their children are happy and well cared for at school. Many of those who wrote a free

text comment in the Ofsted online questionnaire, were highly complimentary about the care, guidance and support their children have received from the adults in school.

- Around the school building, most pupils are polite and show respect to each other and to adults they meet. Older pupils hold doors open and during the inspection they greeted inspectors with warm smiles. They were keen and eager to speak about their work and experience at school. The pupils spoken to were articulate and confident when explaining their favourite lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- When activities in lessons, particularly in one class, do not engage their curiosity, pupils lose interest and this leads to some of them choosing to misbehave. This poor behaviour is not addressed well enough by adults and it continues to disrupt lessons. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and have less confidence that the school deals with behaviour issues well enough.
- In other classes behaviour is much better. Pupils try their best in lessons when teachers have high expectations and provide them with interesting learning activities.
- At breaktimes, in the outside play areas, most pupils socialise together happily and many of them play with pupils of other year groups. Organised activities and sports equipment are readily available for pupils to join in games. Pupils are happy and enjoy times with their friends in the large and well-equipped grounds.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. Good attendance is rewarded and celebrated. The school works closely with outside agencies to support those pupils who do not attend well.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Standards at the end of Year 6 fluctuate year on year. Pupils either attain above the national average for their age, or, as in 2015, too few pupils attain the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and the school falls below the government's floor standards. Although one pupil accounts for a higher proportion in this school, the variance year on year remains a concern. Too few pupils make expected progress and very few make better progress as they move through the school. In-school assessment information demonstrates that this fluctuation remains the case for pupils not in year 6.
- The proportion of children who leave early years achieving at least a good level of development is higher than is nationally expected for their age. This is because a large majority of children enter the school very well prepared for learning.
- The standards achieved by pupils at the end of key stage 1 do not demonstrate adequate progress over the two years from pupils' higher starting points when they leave Reception. Few pupils achieve the higher expectations. This is because not enough is expected of them and they do not have activities that inspire and deepen their understanding and skills.
- At the last inspection progress in mathematics was identified as an area for improvement for the school. School assessment information, together with the work in pupils' books, shows that too few pupils are making expected progress in mathematics in lower key stage 2. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding and this results in variances year on year.
- The proportions of pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are too low to report by individual key stage results for 2015, as this may identify the pupils concerned. The provision for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving across the school. This is because the support staff have received effective training to help them more precisely meet pupils' needs during lessons.
- Inspection evidence indicates that key stage 2 results this academic year are expected to be vastly improved in reading, writing and mathematics. During the inspection, these pupils were articulate and highly motivated for their start at secondary school and their learning. Their results ensure that they can access the curriculum well and are prepared for the challenges of secondary school.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- The large majority of children start the early years with skills and abilities that are typical and above for their age. The proportion of children who leave Reception with a good level of development has remained the same for the last two years and is above national averages. The large majority of children make expected progress from their high starting points and are ready for the challenges of Year 1.

- Adults' expectations of the children in the early years is, at times, too low. Adults do not make enough of the opportunities to extend and challenge the most able children. This is especially true during child-initiated activities outside and in the classroom. As a result, the most able children do not progress as quickly as they could to achieve even more in the Reception Year.
- The outdoor area requires improvement so that children's learning needs are fully catered for. Some children choose not to play outside during child-initiated activities because it is not inviting or inspiring to meet their learning needs or interests.
- In some adult-led activities such as mathematics, children already know the numbers and have advanced further while others struggle with the basics. Teachers do not provide questions and interesting activities for the most able children to excel or provide the precise support and intervention required for the less able.
- The early years leader ensures that children are well cared for in a warm and friendly environment. Staff are caring and support the children well through questions that help encourage a good use of subject-specific vocabulary. Children are articulate and confident when speaking with adults and each other.
- Children are happy and safe. They have settled well into school life, and know and follow the routines well. They enjoy playing considerably with each other. Parents are positive about how well their children have settled at school.

School details

Unique reference number	114830
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10011773

This inspection 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	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Hall
Headteacher	Marion Still
Telephone number	01702 218961
Website	www.barlingmagnaprimary.com
Email address	admin@barlingmagna.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has six classes overall, with two mixed-age classes for older pupils.
- Most pupils are White British and all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after, is below the national average.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2015. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- In September 2015, the school was issued with a pre-warning notice by the local authority. In May 2016, the Department for Education issued the governing body with a warning notice to improve.
- The school's website complies with current statutory requirements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in every class, some jointly with the headteacher.
- The quality of the work in pupils' books was scrutinised across a range of subjects and all year groups.
- Meetings were held with the school's senior leaders and subject leaders, as well as three governors and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke to various groups of pupils, listened to pupils read and spoke to pupils informally at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents including minutes of governors' meetings, the school development plan, the school's evaluation of its own performance, and information on the current progress and attainment of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 44 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the large number of free text messages. Parents' views were also collected informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Kim Hall, lead inspector
Jacqueline Treacy

Her Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

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