

Barnehurst Junior School

Barnehurst Close, Northumberland Heath, Erith, Kent DA8 3NL

Inspection dates

2–4 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Since the school opened in 2013, staff and leaders have ensured that pupils have high aspirations and achieve well. With excellent support from the academy trust, they have made Barnehurst a vibrant, caring school community.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. Supported extremely well by the trust and by her deputies, she nurtures, develops and challenges staff to constantly reflect on, and improve, their skills. As a result, staff are proud and happy to work at the school. Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Strong values underpin all aspects of the school's work. As one pupil put it: 'Our school values are important to us. They keep us safe.' Pupils feel safe because they know that all the adults in the school put their well-being and happiness first.
- Pupils make excellent progress from high starting points when they join the school. As a result, they leave the school with standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are well above those achieved nationally. The most able pupils make rapid progress and achieve the highest levels of attainment.

- The school's rich, interesting curriculum provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils never fail to exemplify the British values of respect and tolerance.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are interesting, lively young citizens who greet visitors with a smile. Their parents and their school should be very proud of them.
- Parents speak highly of the school and say that their children thrive because of the strong teaching and the care that they receive. As one parent said: 'They take care of all the little things you worry about as a mum.'
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make rapid progress and achieve well because of highly skilled teaching which meets their needs.
- Pupils' books show that they make strong progress across a wide range of subjects. Leaders recognise that better consistency through the school in the approach to teaching handwriting would improve the presentation of some written work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop a consistent approach to teaching handwriting in order to further improve the presentation of written work across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
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- Since the school became an academy, leaders, including governors, have worked tirelessly and extremely effectively to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils. Leaders benefit greatly from the support of the Primary First Trust. The professional development offered by the trust is strong and highly innovative. For example, leaders have worked to develop a rigorous assessment system. This has proved to be accurate and reliable in helping teachers to pinpoint pupils' next steps in learning.
- Some of the school's senior leaders are also associate leaders for the trust. This means that they use their skills and expertise to support other schools while constantly learning and reflecting on how to improve practice in their own school. As a result, leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching and learning at Barnehurst is outstanding.
- Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the strengths of the school and are highly ambitious with plans to improve it further. They have created a strong culture of reflection in the school. Teachers are well supported to improve their skills and are proud of the work that they do in providing pupils with an outstanding quality of education.
- Leaders are exceptionally ambitious for pupils' achievement. A range of clubs and activities which inspire and motivate pupils enhance the rich, broad curriculum. For example, one pupil who attended the school's engineering club explained how this helped him decide to work in robotics when leaving education. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the curriculum and are proud to say that they learn about everything from 'football to Bunsen burners!'
- The school provides exceptionally well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Displays around the school show that pupils benefit from extensive studies of different religions and beliefs. Pupils are able to confidently discuss different faiths and they show tolerance and respect for beliefs which are different from their own. The school's work is underpinned by key values which are linked closely to the British values of tolerance, liberty and democracy. Pupils become 'ambassadors' for different aspects of school life. For example, reading and mathematics ambassadors offer classmates support in lessons.
- Leaders have used the sport premium funding very well. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to take part in sports and to develop socially as a result of their participation. Pupil premium funding is spent wisely and effectively to provide a range bespoke, individual and group interventions. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able achieve very well.
- Leaders who have responsibility for subject areas have excellent subject knowledge and are developing highly effective leadership skills as a result of the mentoring and coaching they receive from senior leaders. The impact of their work is clear in pupils' books. For example, at the start of this academic year, there was a training focus in school on developing reasoning skills in mathematics. Books showed an immediate improvement in this aspect of mathematics work.

- Leaders have ensured that the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is of high quality and leads to rapid progress. Pupils read widely and often. They benefit from exposure to high-quality literature in lessons. They enjoy reading, and talk at length and with enthusiasm about their favourite authors and books. Pupils write for a range of audiences and are given interesting and stimulating themes and subjects to write about. Recent improvements to mathematics teaching have ensured that pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are strong.
- Leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. The school's precise system for identification of needs ensures that referrals for support are made swiftly. Interventions and teaching are targeted appropriately to meet the needs of individuals. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve extremely well.
- Parents value the work of the school greatly. They say that their children achieve well and are well cared for.

Governance

- Governance is a strength. Governors work exceptionally well with the trust to support and challenge the work of the school. They have an incisive knowledge of the school's past and a very clear vision for how they wish the school to develop in the future.
- Governors benefit from the strong leadership of the chair who sets high expectations for their work. Roles and responsibilities are clear and governors secure appropriate training to improve their skills. Governors' minutes show that they ask the right questions in order to challenge leaders and to continually support school improvement.
- New governors are well supported and enthusiastic in their role. They are proud to be part of this high-functioning governing body.
- Governors have an in-depth knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school. They manage the appraisal of the headteacher's work very well. They ensure that pupil premium and sport funding are used wisely to benefit pupils. They fulfil all statutory duties effectively and make sure that the website provides all the necessary information to parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that systems for keeping children safe are robust. Keeping pupils safe is at the heart of the school's work and is the absolute priority for all staff working in the school. Actions taken as a result of any concerns are swift and effective. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies to keep their pupils safe and protected.
- All staff and governors receive regular and comprehensive safeguarding training. This includes up-to-date training on radicalisation and extremism. Leaders work well with parents, carers and the community to make sure that pupils are kept safe and feel supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- At Barnehurst, teaching and learning are typically outstanding. Teachers work hard to make learning fun. They inspire pupils with interesting topics and activities. They motivate pupils to be successful because of their very high expectations and their absolute belief in their pupils and what they are capable of achieving. As one Year 3 pupil said, 'We are always expected to try our very best.'
- A great strength of teaching and learning is the opportunity pupils are given to work with each other and learn from each other. Pupils work collaboratively together and often experience learning as a social event, where they genuinely enjoy listening to each other's thoughts and opinions and reflect on their own views because of them. Pupil ambassadors for different aspects of the school's work also have a good impact on pupils' progress. They support other pupils in lessons and this helps the most able pupils consolidate and enhance their own learning.
- High-quality questioning by adults stimulates and deepens pupils' thinking. Teaching and teaching assistants work hard to develop pupils' use of language and vocabulary. This means that pupils are highly engaging and articulate in conversations about their learning and have an extensive vocabulary which they use with confidence. The most able pupils flourish because they are given every opportunity to pursue ideas and to use a high level of spoken language.
- The assessment system is used well by teachers to chart pupils' progress and to identify misconceptions or any gaps in learning swiftly. As a result, no child is left behind. Immediate action is taken to support pupils with any aspect of learning they are struggling with. Teachers use the guidance and support from leaders to ensure that they do whatever they can to meet the needs of the individual pupils in their class. Because of this, pupils of all ability, including those who are disadvantaged, make rapid progress and achieve excellent outcomes.
- Reading is extremely well taught across the school. High-quality literature is used skilfully by teachers to promote a deep understanding of texts and to inspire a love of reading. Typical of this was a Year 6 lesson where pupils were predicting what the theme of a book could be, based on the front cover. The teacher's skilful and insightful questioning ensured that pupils thought deeply and used highly sophisticated language to describe their inferences.
- Pupils read widely across the curriculum and this supports their learning in other subjects. Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the books they are reading. They often do this without being prompted to do so by adults. The lowest-attaining readers in the school make strong progress and achieve standards which are above the national average. The most able readers are able to enjoy texts which are above the level expected for their age.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong and ensures that pupils make rapid progress. In particular, teachers have been effective in providing richer opportunities for pupils to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills. The impact of this was seen in pupils' books across the school. Pupils are successfully tackling complicated reasoning tasks.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive because of the excellent teaching and the sensitive care that they receive. They are supported well in classrooms and when they receive specific intervention sessions outside the classroom. As a result, they make similar strong progress to their classmates. Teachers make sure that all pupils' contributions are valued equally in lessons. An inclusive culture pervades the school.
- Pupils write at length across a range of subjects. Teachers make sure that pupils are given interesting reasons to write. For example, a 'crime scene investigation' took place during the inspection.
- Teacher's feedback and guidance to pupils challenges them and helps them make excellent progress. The lack of a consistent approach to teaching handwriting across the school sometimes means that some work is not presented as well as it could be. Leaders recognise that this is an area for development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are highly motivated, confident learners. They believe they can be successful and have high expectations for themselves and for their future.
- Pupils never fail to engage enthusiastically with the tasks they are given. They do their best. They persevere and are resilient in the face of challenge. They benefit greatly from the role models that all the adults working with them provide. There are high levels of mutual respect between adults and pupils.
- Pupils' emotional well-being and safety are the priorities of all staff in the school. Pupils are kept safe and parents agree that their children feel very safe in this caring school community.
- Pupils show a very thorough knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online. They talk openly and honestly about their awareness of radicalisation and extremism. They are confident that they can keep themselves safe outside the school and are completely aware of what they must do if they are anxious or concerned about themselves or their classmates.
- Pupils are aware of the importance of tackling prejudice or bullying, including homophobia and racism. They confirm that no bullying exists within the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons, in the playground and around the school is exemplary. They benefit from a caring, safe school community of which they are proud. As pupils move around the building, they chat happily about their day and their learning. Pupils can be heard negotiating maturely about the use of resources or space when they go out into the playground.

- In classrooms there is the constant, happy sound of discourse between pupils and their teachers or pupils and each other. Pupils are absolutely clear about why they are at school and they are keen to learn. As a result, incidents of low-level disruption in lessons are extremely rare.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are serious and reflective about their learning but equally serious about having fun and enjoying their life at school, which they do. Pupils are great fun to be around. They are interesting, witty and confident young learners.
- The vast majority of pupils attend well. The school staff have worked relentlessly and effectively to improve the persistent absence of vulnerable pupils from families in difficult circumstances. Pupils who are missing in education have had an impact on overall attendance. Leaders are rigorous in keeping children on role until they secure another school place. Despite these challenges, attendance is now in line with national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- From starting points which are often high, pupils make rapid progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards have been significantly above the national average since the school became an academy. Pupils' books show that they make good progress in a range of subjects in addition to English and mathematics. These include history, science and religious education. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school.
- In the 2016 Year 6 tests, pupils' attainment was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard was well above the national average. Standards achieved in science were also above the national average.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the pupil premium funding has a very positive impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Individual pupils' needs are analysed so that they receive the exact support and intervention they need to be successful in their learning and achieve well.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make strong progress and achieve standards which are higher than those achieved by all pupils nationally. Leaders identified that, in the past, not all disadvantaged pupils who entered the school with average attainment achieved the higher levels at the end of Year 6. Pupils' current work and their assessment information show that interventions have been successful in improving the outcomes for these pupils this year.
- The most able pupils achieve well because teaching stretches and challenges them. Leaders and teachers regularly review pupils' progress data to ensure that targets for pupils are ambitious. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are on track to achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics is improving even further.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress. This is because the school staff identify needs swiftly. Additional funding is spent well which means that carefully thought out support is provided, which is highly effective in enhancing pupils' progress.

School details

Unique reference number	140321
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10019227

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steven Ristow
Headteacher	Mrs Cassandra Malone
Telephone number	01322 334 214
Website	www.barnehurstfederation.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@barnehurst-inf.bexley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is part of The Primary First Trust and is federated with Barnehurst Infant School.
- Barnehurst is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is slightly smaller than average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The next largest group are of Black or Black British Caribbean heritage.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year classrooms at least twice. Observations were undertaken with the headteacher and with the two deputy headteachers.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning and their views on the school. Pupils took inspectors on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.
- All leaders met with inspectors to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils in the lunch hall, in lessons and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised books to see what progress pupils make across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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