

# Banister Primary School

Archers Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 2LS

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, together with the strong leadership team and governors, has led a determined, successful drive to improve the school since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders and governors place the well-being of pupils at the heart of their work. Staff enable pupils to be academically successful and also prioritise their social and emotional development.
- The school is a friendly, inclusive place, where everyone values the rich diversity of pupils and their families.
- Staff assess pupils' prior learning accurately and plan lessons that help them to make good progress and achieve well.
- All staff benefit from a coaching programme. This strengthens their practice as they learn from colleagues. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Children get off to a strong start in the early years, and they make good progress, often from low starting points. Adults focus on equipping children with the key skills they need to be successful in school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many praise staff's encouragement of their children, which helps them to become happy, eager learners.
- Pupils behave impeccably, both in lessons and at breaktimes. They show courtesy, thoughtfulness and kindness to each other and to adults. Classrooms are characterised by positive, respectful relationships and everyone tries their best.
- Pupils make good progress, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Governors know the school well and hold leaders closely to account.
- Outcomes in mathematics improved in 2018 as a result of a different approach to teaching. Pupils learn the basic concepts and skills of mathematics and build securely on them to achieve well.
- Year 1 pupils achieve well in phonics and almost all are ready for the greater challenges of reading in key stage 2. Pupils love reading but, by the end of Year 6, too few have strong higher-order reading skills. Attainment is less strong in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of learning experiences across the curriculum. However, they have too few opportunities to develop subject-specific skills and knowledge, including in science.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that outcomes continue to rise by:
  - fully embedding the new approach to the teaching of mathematics
  - strengthening the teaching of reading in key stage 2 so that pupils apply their higher-order reading skills confidently.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that pupils learn subject-specific knowledge and skills in all foundation subjects, particularly in science.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, well supported by senior leaders, has led an unwavering drive for improvement since the previous inspection. Senior leaders and governors have a clear mission for the school to be high-achieving. They have high expectations for what pupils can achieve, regardless of their levels of need and, as a result, pupils rise to these expectations, work hard and achieve well.
- Senior leaders know the school well. They recognise the school's many strengths and have detailed plans in place to bring about further improvement. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress are thorough, accurate and effective.
- Senior leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching through a programme of coaching in which all staff strive to improve and learn from each other. This has resulted in an open, reflective team that is ambitious and motivated to sharpen its practice. Staff feel well supported and empowered to rise to the challenges.
- The morale of staff is high because they feel part of an inclusive, caring team that strives daily to make a positive difference to the lives of pupils and their families. One teacher said, 'I am happy to come to school because we are doing something great.' All staff spoken to enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of the team.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent wrote: 'All staff wholly understand the importance of building confidence, and showing kindness and understanding to get the best from the children.'
- Leaders are united in their mission to celebrate the rich diversity represented in the school's community. Being recognised as a 'school of sanctuary' was a proud moment, recognising and rewarding the school's inclusive work.
- Senior leaders are effective in developing the leadership skills of teachers and other staff. Several senior leaders started work at the school as newly qualified teachers. Many middle leaders are new to their roles and are beginning to take the lead in their various areas of responsibility. They are well supported by senior colleagues.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning experiences across the curriculum, including many after-school clubs. Many pupils are at an early stage of learning English, so the wider curriculum is strongly focused on developing pupils' reading and writing skills. Lessons in English are planned to include some subjects from the wider curriculum. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to learn the subject-specific knowledge and skills needed to achieve as well in the full range of subjects as they do in English and mathematics. The wider curriculum requires greater focus, particularly in science.
- Senior leaders make good use of the additional funding for pupils with SEND and for disadvantaged pupils. Staff understand the additional challenges that these groups of pupils face and provide for their needs well.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is also used effectively to increase pupils' participation in physical activities and to develop staff's skills to teach to a good standard.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for. Pupils enjoy a range of interesting visits to exciting places as well as visitors coming in to the school. Leaders draw on the wide variety of pupils' cultures and backgrounds to help pupils gain a rich understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils have opportunities to sing and perform in front of real audiences. For example, during the inspection, a group of pupils enjoyed singing at the Royal Albert Hall.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the school well and offer effective support to leaders. They bring a range of skills and experience to help the school improve and have undertaken training to sharpen their skills.
- In common with senior leaders, governors are ambitious for the school to be the best it can be. They hold leaders closely to account for the progress pupils make and check carefully that what senior leaders tell them is accurate. Governors visit the school regularly to carry out checks, undertaking a range of activities, such as looking at pupils' work and talking to them about their learning. Governors also attend meetings where class teachers and senior leaders discuss the progress made by pupils in each class.
- Governors are not complacent. They are always looking to improve their work for the benefit of the school. Earlier this year, they commissioned a detailed review to find ways of being even more effective. They have drawn up an action plan as a result.
- Governors understand their responsibility for overseeing the use of the school's budget. Decisions about the spending of the additional funding for different groups of pupils are carefully considered and the impact of this spending is evaluated closely.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is the highest priority. Staff, pupils and parents alike fully endorse this and support leaders' work to keep pupils safe.
- Regular, up-to-date training is provided for all staff, who are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including noticing possible signs of radicalisation. Staff are vigilant and alert to signs that a pupil may be at risk. They report and record all concerns quickly and accurately.
- All aspects of the administration of safeguarding are carried out meticulously. Risk assessments are in place for all aspects of school life, including plans to support disabled pupils in the event of a fire. The record of recruitment checks on adults who work in school is compliant. Senior leaders and governors carry out regular monitoring to ensure that it remains so.
- When necessary, senior leaders seek the support of external agencies and leave no stone unturned in obtaining the right help for vulnerable pupils and families.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The culture of the school leaves no room for complacency.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are underpinned by the coaching programme for all teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, all staff are ambitious, reflective and keen to improve their practice to benefit all pupils. Staff understand that reflecting on their mistakes can play an important role in improving their teaching. This transparent and accountable approach has resulted in the quality of teaching improving across the school.
- Teachers plan lessons based on their accurate assessments of pupils. They ensure that low-attaining pupils receive the right type and level of support to enable them to make strong progress. The most able pupils are usually appropriately challenged, particularly in mathematics. Staff typically check on pupils' understanding throughout lessons, adapting and refining tasks in response to pupils' needs. Occasionally, however, lessons do not stretch the most able and staff are not quick to notice when pupils are ready to move on to more challenging work.
- Pupils carefully follow the advice that staff provide, whether orally or in writing. Even younger pupils are beginning to appreciate the value of editing to improve their writing and correct their mistakes in mathematics.
- Teachers are skilled in identifying the different learning needs of pupils and the additional challenges they face. They effectively support the learning of pupils with SEND and ensure that lessons are fully inclusive.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which allows them to ask probing questions to check on pupils' understanding and to make them think deeply.
- Recent changes to the teaching of mathematics have brought about significant improvements in this subject. Teachers provide pupils with a strong mathematical foundation and build mastery in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils build on this foundation by practising their mathematical skills in a range of contexts, using a variety of resources and equipment. Pupils move confidently from using apparatus to being able to represent their thinking in pictures and diagrams, before working calculations out accurately using formal written methods.
- Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to explain their work and justify the methods they have chosen to solve problems. Pupils have regular opportunities to grapple with quite challenging problems and to reason mathematically. Where pupils have learned something new or overcome a particular hurdle in their learning, they sometimes write themselves prompts for the next time they meet this type of problem. For example, one pupil wrote a note to remind himself to multiply the units first when carrying out long multiplication.
- The teaching of writing draws on a range of topics and subject areas. Staff provide pupils with a variety of imaginative activities to develop their writing skills across a range of genres. Pupils develop a clear understanding of how to write for different purposes and audiences. They are given many opportunities to independently apply their skills by writing extended pieces regularly. Leaders have plans to further improve

writing by using some of the mastery principles that have secured school-wide improvement in mathematics.

- A clear focus on developing pupils' grammar, vocabulary and spelling knowledge in key stage 1 has equipped pupils to be successful writers in key stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about their favourite books. They are knowledgeable about a range of authors and genres, and have informed opinions about literature. For example, two Year 6 boys were involved in an energetic discussion about whether Caliban, a character in Shakespeare's 'The Tempest', should be regarded as a villain or a victim. However, in general, pupils lack the higher-order reading skills necessary to achieve the higher standard in the end of key stage 2 tests.
- Occasionally, pupils encounter unfamiliar words in texts that teachers have provided, and struggle because they do not understand the meaning. They do not have resources readily available to find the meaning for themselves.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The well-being of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders place a high priority on developing pupils' characters as well as their academic ability. Learning about how to be a successful citizen is threaded through all aspects of the curriculum and has a positive effect on pupils. For example, pupils were able to explain clearly why it is important to listen carefully and understand another person's point of view before trying to promote your own opinion.
- Pupils are very positive about their experience of school and comment on how cooperative everyone is in this community. Even very young children understand how to show respect and kindness to others beyond their friendship groups.
- Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils clearly stated that they are safe from bullying, saying that Banister Primary School is a 'no bullying zone'. On the rare occasion that it does happen, adults deal with it quickly and decisively.
- The neatly presented work in pupils' exercise books reflects the pride they take in their learning. They work hard and have positive attitudes to learning, which help them to achieve well. One pupil told an inspector, 'I'm not going to do anything except my best.'
- Pupils strongly promote the school's inclusive approach and are confident and welcoming to peers and visitors alike. Those pupils new to the school receive a friendly, warm welcome and quickly come to understand that the school is proud of its rich diversity. Pupils are kind and seek ways to help and support each other.
- Pupils make the most of the many opportunities to take on a responsibility role in the school. The 'leader in me' programme allows pupils to apply to work alongside different staff, including senior leaders, the school business manager and the site manager. Consequently, older pupils have a good understanding of how the school operates, including the growing challenges of a working within a tight budget.

- The school's learning council has a clear voice. Members are reflective and determined to make a positive difference, not only to the school, but also to the wider city. Pupils organise events to raise money for a variety of charities. One pupil explained, 'I joined the learning council because I realised that I could help the entire school.'
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in a range of situations both inside and outside school, including an age-appropriate good understanding of how to stay safe online.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave well in lessons, striving to achieve their best. They are cooperative and work well together, not only helping each other, but also challenging each other's views and opinions.
- Pupils behave impeccably around the school and in the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes. From their first days in school, children learn to line up for lunch, wait patiently and take turns. Older pupils set an excellent example for younger ones to follow.
- Classrooms and the school's environment reflect the high standards that leaders set for the school. Displays in classrooms provide pupils with helpful reminders about the methods they have learned and spellings they will need. All are carefully and neatly presented.
- Senior leaders are relentless in reinforcing their message about the importance of regular attendance. They use a number of different approaches to improve rates of attendance and reduce persistent absence, including supporting families who find regular attendance challenging. Pupils' attendance is showing an improving trend. Last year, attendance figures were in line with those seen nationally. Although the level of persistent absence is just above the national average, it has been reducing year on year.
- Senior leaders have been particularly successful in improving the rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress. The proportions of pupils who are on track to achieve the expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are increasing as a result of improvement in teaching.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress, some from very low starting points. Staff assess their learning thoroughly and put interventions in place, which are evaluated regularly. As a result, this group of pupils make substantial, sustained progress towards the standards expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress and achieve well. By the end of key stage 2 in 2018, their achievements were in line with those of other pupils in school in writing. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was higher than that of other pupils. Their attainment in mathematics increased sharply from 2017.



- Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 improved sharply compared to the previous year. Progress rates from the end of key stage 1 to the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average, except for writing, where pupils made very strong progress. Pupils' progress in mathematics improved as a result of the school's new approach to the teaching of mathematics focused on building pupils' skills through a mastery approach. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve in line with other pupils.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 improved sharply. Attainment in mathematics was close to the national average. The proportions of pupils who achieved and exceeded expectations in writing were above the national averages. Pupils' attainment in reading improved in 2018 but remained well below that seen nationally in recent years.
- In 2017, the proportions of key stage 1 pupils who achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were in line with the national averages. In 2018, the outcomes of key stage 1 pupils were similar to the previous year.
- In 2018, fewer pupils than seen nationally achieved the higher standards at the end of both key stages 1 and 2. However, attainment in writing improved sharply at the end of key stage 2 so that a larger number of pupils attained the greater-depth standard than in previous years.
- Pupils achieve well in phonics. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils have achieved the expected standard and are well prepared to take on the greater challenges in reading in key stage 2.
- The high level of mobility of pupils has had a significantly negative impact on pupils' outcomes across the school. For example, the school has convincing evidence that a number of most-able pupils left the school at the end of Year 5 in 2017. Some returned home overseas and some moved out of the area. Senior leaders describe the current Year 6 cohort of pupils as 'barely recognisable' compared to the cohort that started key stage 2 in Year 3. This is because so many pupils have come and gone during a four-year period.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leaders have a clear view of how to equip children with the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are reflective and evaluate the quality of early years provision regularly. For example, after a dip in outcomes in 2017, they analysed the reasons for this and acted promptly, resulting in improvements in children's progress and attainment in 2018.
- Children make a strong start in early years. They learn important routines, helping them to settle quickly and play sensibly and safely. Children swiftly learn to trust the adults and each other. As a result, children are happy, confident and able to fully explore the learning environment, completing activities and learning well. One parent said: 'My son has learned so much; comes home speaking very positively and is happy about learning.'
- The broad curriculum in early years is effective in meeting children's needs. Teachers use their observations and assessment of children's learning to shape activities and the



environment. This enables children to achieve well.

- Children make good progress, often from low starting points. Early years adults focus carefully on equipping children with the skills that they need to speak clearly and listen carefully. In addition, they help children develop socially and emotionally. Children who speak English as an additional language develop their understanding and confidence in speaking English rapidly because staff provide well for their needs. By the end of their first year in school, all children are well prepared to tackle the greater challenges of Year 1.
- Phonics is taught well. Teachers have high expectations, so children try their hardest and feel proud of their work. Children quickly develop a secure grasp of basic phonics and are able to apply their skills independently in a variety of early reading and writing activities.
- Teachers plan activities carefully to build children's academic and social skills and their enjoyment of learning. Children listen carefully to adults and use the vocabulary that they have learned in their play. Adults typically use praise and questioning effectively to deepen children's understanding. However, occasionally some adults miss opportunities to further develop children's knowledge and skills, including when working alongside children during independent activities. For example, some questioning does not give children the chance to explain their thinking and ideas fully.
- The early years induction arrangements include meetings with pre-school providers and with parents, as well as 'play and stay' sessions to help children to get to know the setting. New children meet those who are currently in the Reception class. This means that they have friends when they start. These activities combine to ensure that staff have the right information to support each child's positive start at the school.
- Parents play an important role and are included in various aspects of their children's learning. They contribute to the online assessment system by recording achievements at home and receive regular updates on their children's progress.

## School details

Unique reference number	116116
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10046058

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter McBride
Headteacher	Kate Vincent
Telephone number	023 8039 3313
Website	<a href="http://www.banisterschool.co.uk">www.banisterschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@banisterschool.co.uk">info@banisterschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	1–2 October 2014

## Information about this school

- Banister Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are 14 classes, two for each year group. Since the previous inspection, the school has grown from being a school with children from Reception to Year 4. It is now a primary school covering the full primary age range.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average. Levels of deprivation are higher than those seen nationally.
- Around 30% of pupils have White British heritage. Pupils are from several different minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national figure.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held several meetings with the headteacher and assistant headteacher about various aspects of the school's performance, including one on leaders' self-evaluation and another on pupils' current achievement.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors, including the vice-chair. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Some of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or one of the senior leaders. An inspector observed an assembly. The lead inspector also carried out a learning walk with senior leaders to gather evidence about the school's curriculum.
- Together with senior leaders, inspectors looked at pupils' work across all subjects and in all year groups. The work of disadvantaged pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils with SEND was included in this scrutiny.
- Inspectors met with several senior and middle leaders to discuss their areas of responsibility. Meetings were held with those responsible for mathematics, English, the early years and provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to a group of pupils about their experience of school. Inspectors also talked to pupils on the playground and observed their behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- An inspector held a formal meeting with a group of staff, including teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 21 free-text comments. The lead inspector also considered a letter from a parent. The 31 responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire were also considered.
- An inspector met with parents at the start of the day.
- An inspector visited the breakfast club run by the school.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including those recording the work of the governing body and the single central record of recruitment checks on adults who work in the school. They examined information on the progress of current pupils and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Judith O'Hare	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Bowen	Ofsted Inspector

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