

Inspection of Barling Magna Primary Academy

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

Inspection dates: 9–10 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy a calm and positive atmosphere for learning at this school. They get on very well together. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. School is a happy place where pupils can thrive. Leaders and staff have high expectations of what all pupils can do. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum, particularly so in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school's motto is 'caring, learning and achieving together'. The day-to-day life of the school reflects this well. Comments from parents included, 'This is a lovely school with a small village feel.'

Pupils say they feel safe at school. Bullying is rare. Pupils know there are caring adults they can turn to if they are sad. Pupils attend well and enjoy the extensive variety of subjects that they learn.

Pupils say school is fun. They join lots of different clubs. They experience exciting outings, including to the theatre and the planetarium.

Leaders know what needs to improve. Teachers need to provide pupils with ways to check the meaning of some difficult words they learn to spell. New subject leads need time to further develop teachers' knowledge so they are equally skilled and confident in all subjects as they are in English, mathematics, science and computing.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education has improved markedly since the appointment of the new head of school. Leaders, well supported by the trust, have embedded a culture of high expectations. Pupils' achievement and behaviour has improved markedly as a result. Leaders make good use of external support. The routines which teachers establish ensure that pupils know what the rules are and how to behave.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They maintain a high level of concentration in lessons. Pupils commit to their learning and this helps them to learn well. Teachers have a strong focus on high expectations for the quality of work pupils do.

All subjects have clear plans, which meet the demands of the national curriculum. Teachers plan topics in a logical order. Subject leaders develop their expertise by working with colleagues across the trust. In some subjects, such as geography, subject leaders still need time to identify what further support teachers might need to help pupils learn even more effectively.

Teaching reading has a high priority. All children read every day. Staff are well trained to deliver high-quality phonics sessions, so that younger pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. Those who fall behind are speedily identified and receive the right support to help them catch up.

Leaders have focused on 'getting the basics right'. Spelling is an important part of this. Pupils' work shows that this focus has been successful. Pupils learn to spell an ambitious range of words. However, teachers need to equip all pupils with the skills and strategies to check for themselves what unfamiliar words mean.

Teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding of mathematics knowledge and skills. Pupils use this knowledge well across the curriculum. Teachers deal with pupils' misconceptions skilfully and swiftly.

Leaders involve parents well in school life. For example, through 'family Friday', when parents visit the Reception class and join in with learning activities.

Pupils learn about other religions and cultures and understand the need for tolerance and kindness. They vote to choose pupils who take up leadership roles. This helps them to understand the concept of democracy.

The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers adapt work to meet pupils' needs. Staff are ambitious for what pupils can achieve.

In the early years, children receive good care. The indoor and outdoor areas provide a varied range of opportunities to develop children's social and physical skills. There is a strong focus on developing early language and phonics knowledge. Children enjoy story time and join in by acting out the characters. They are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Trustees know the school well. They challenge and support school leaders to ensure that the school is managed effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a vigilant and caring ethos in the school. Staff receive regular and appropriate training. They can recognise the signs that a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff are confident to report any concerns. Leaders follow up concerns rigorously and swiftly. Leaders accurately record concerns and actions taken. They seek support from external agencies when required so that pupils get the help that they need.

Pupils learn to keep themselves safe, including when working online. Leaders know the risks that exist in the local area. Pupils learn about these risks through assemblies and special lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- School leaders have thought carefully about the support that teachers need to teach different subjects well. This has had a very positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in English, mathematics, science and computing. Since new curriculum plans have been introduced, leaders have not yet evaluated whether teachers need support and professional development to improve further their teaching in other subjects. All subject leaders need to evaluate whether all teachers are equally effective in supporting pupils' learning across the whole curriculum.
- Leaders are determined that pupils are exposed to a wide range of ambitious vocabulary so that pupils can access challenging texts. Occasionally, pupils have difficulty in understanding some harder words they come across, for example when practising spellings. Teachers need to provide pupils with strategies and skills so that all pupils can check the meanings of unfamiliar words for themselves.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	143948
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10112151
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Daniel Smith
Headteacher	Hayley O'Dea (Executive Headteacher), Susan Clarke (Head of School)
Website	www.barlingmagna.essex.sch.uk/essex/primary/barlingmagna
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a member of The Brickfields Multi-Academy Trust. The school became a sponsored academy in February 2017. The head of school was appointed in February 2017. It is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The predecessor school, called Barling Magna Community Primary School, was judged to be inadequate in June 2016.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held meetings with the head of school, the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other members of staff.
- A meeting was held with two trustees, one of whom is the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at break and lunchtimes. Inspectors also spoke to two groups of pupils and spoke to pupils

when visiting lessons to gather their views on the school.

- The school's records of safeguarding checks were reviewed, including the single central record. We spoke to pupils about how they keep themselves safe and whether there was any bullying in school. An inspector held a meeting with the designated lead for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke to staff to ascertain their understanding of their safeguarding duties.
- Both inspectors talked to parents at the end of school on the first day of the inspection.
- An inspector met with staff to ask about their well-being and workload. Fourteen responses to the staff survey were considered along with 23 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors took into account the 31 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 31 free-text responses.
- The inspection focused on reading, mathematics, computing and science. We visited lessons, spoke to subject leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, and reviewed pupils' work.
- Inspectors also reviewed other areas of the curriculum and the school's plans for pupils' wider personal development.

Inspection team

Kay Leach, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Russell Ayling

Ofsted Inspector

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