

# Inspection of a good school: Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School

Townfield Lane, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4QL

---

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

## Outcome

Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils clearly enjoy their time at Barnton Primary. They are happy and feel proud to be part of the school.

Pupils have excellent relationships with the adults in school. Staff are kind and approachable. Pupils feel that they can share any concerns that they may have with members of staff. As such, they feel safe at school.

Leaders have created a culture where staff share high expectations for all pupils. The well-thought-out curriculum ensures that pupils have a strong understanding of the topics that they study. For pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work is adapted well to match their needs.

Pupils behave well in school. There is no disruption to pupils' learning. Pupils feel reassured by the way in which staff deal decisively with any instances of poor behaviour or bullying. Pupils are respectful of other's feelings and say that bullying is rare.

The large majority of parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school. Many comment on how staff 'go above and beyond' to support pupils in their learning. Parents and pupils are very positive about the wide range of additional activities that are on offer at the school.

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

Leaders have developed an extremely well-structured curriculum, including in early years, that provides children and pupils with meaningful experiences in all subjects. Each subject is meticulously planned to build on pupils' prior learning and to set high expectations of pupils' achievement. Staff are experts in the subjects that they teach. They are enthusiastic and ensure that pupils have a strong understanding of the themes of each

subject. In history, for example, pupils build well on their prior learning to develop their understanding of how the past has influenced our lives today. They know the significance of past events as well as key concepts such as 'empire' and 'civilisation'.

Senior leaders support staff well in the management of their workload. Staff are motivated and enjoy working at the school. Trustees and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They know that leaders are having a positive impact on the quality of education in the school. However, they do not question leaders closely enough to demonstrate how effectively leaders are improving the curriculum and the effect that this has on pupils' achievement.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Staff help pupils to develop a love of reading. There are effective arrangements to support pupils to catch up if they find reading difficult. In early years, phonics teaching starts at the earliest opportunity. Children in the provision for two-year-olds are encouraged all of the time to develop their early language skills. Leaders make sure that those children who have difficulties with speech and language get the right help at the right time. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well across early years and Year 1 to develop pupils' phonics skills. As they progress through key stage 2, pupils become fluent and expressive readers.

Leaders have structured the curriculum for writing well so that pupils use a widening range of vocabulary to add interest to their writing. The basics for writing are taught extremely well in early years. Children start to write in simple, descriptive sentences. As they move through the school, pupils have opportunities to revisit their learning. They develop into competent writers who carefully select the vocabulary they use to have a deliberate effect on the reader. Staff ensure that pupils' writing is developed exceptionally well between most year groups.

In recent years, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has been above, and often well above, that of other pupils nationally. Leaders are currently working on making this even better, particularly in pupils' writing, by ironing out minor variations in the way in which the curriculum plans are delivered. For pupils who access the specialist SEND provision, work is matched well to their needs. These pupils are supported well by knowledgeable staff to achieve well. Other pupils with SEND also benefit from targeted support so that the curriculum is matched well to their next steps in learning.

Pupils focus on their learning well. Their conduct and behaviour are impeccable. Some pupils act as peer mentors at breaktimes to resolve any minor disputes. Leaders have created an ethos in the school where pupils are respectful of views, opinions and beliefs that may be different from their own. The curriculum provides opportunities to learn about different cultures. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Older pupils have a range of responsibilities. These pupils are effective role models.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors have received appropriate training which is continually updated. They have a good understanding of issues that pupils face, such as online safety. They use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness of how to keep themselves safe. For example, the school's 'E-cadets' lead lessons about online safety so that other pupils across the school understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils feel safe because of the caring nature of staff. They know that adults in the school will act on their concerns to support them. Leaders ensure that any concerns about pupils are followed up rigorously.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Although governors and trustees ask questions about many aspects of school, they do not question in enough depth about the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve the quality of education. Trustees should check to make sure that leaders are held to account for the actions taken to improve the curriculum in more detail. This should be more sharply focused on the effect that this has on improving pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have implemented the curriculum exceptionally well. However, there is some minor variation in the quality of pupils' writing in key stage 2. Leaders should ensure that staff deliver the intended curriculum so that pupils build on their prior learning to consistently meet the aims of the curriculum.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School, to be good in June 2012.

## **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 are the school and you are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144058
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122048
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	495
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mr Michael Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Lawson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.barnton.cheshire.sch.uk">www.barnton.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2017. When its predecessor school, Barnton Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school has specialist provision for up to 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, I met with the chief executive officer, headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- I spoke with one trustee and the chair of the local governing body.
- I also spoke to leaders, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their work across the curriculum.
- I met with groups of pupils from across the school to ask them about safeguarding. I reviewed documentation that included the school's safeguarding policy, the register of the checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.

- I observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils, teachers and senior leaders.
- I took account of 122 responses to the Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 30 responses to the staff survey.
- I considered reading, writing and history deeply as part of this inspection. For these subjects, I spoke with the headteacher, met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, undertook an analysis of pupils' work and visited lessons. I heard pupils read. I also looked at pupils' work in subjects across the curriculum and met with other subject leaders.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:  
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2020