

Inspection of Barrowford School

Rushton Street, Barrowford, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 6EA

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

All pupils, regardless of their race, gender or culture, are warmly welcomed at Barrowford School. Leaders, governors and staff are united in their ambition for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to succeed. Pupils strive to live up to these high expectations. They achieve well across most subjects.

Staff expect pupils to behave well. Most do. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and around school. They are polite and well mannered. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and when it does happen, staff are quick to deal with it.

Pupils are mature in their approach to resolving conflict with their peers. They understand that there is always someone in school to support them if they feel anxious or worried. There are positive relationships between adults and pupils. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils learn to become good citizens. Older pupils particularly enjoy the responsibilities that they are given, for example helping younger pupils to read. Pupils are made aware of topical issues, and they discuss and debate these issues with their peers during the weekly 'big picture' assemblies. Pupils contribute to society by raising donations for charitable causes. These positive experiences help pupils to become rounded and grounded citizens.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and well organised. The curriculum is purposeful and meets the needs of the pupils who attend the school. This includes pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resources provision). These pupils are taught the full range of national curriculum subjects.

The curriculums in many subjects are delivered successfully by teachers across the school. From the early years to Year 6, teachers are clear about the knowledge that should be taught and the order in which content should be delivered. However, in a few subjects, the curriculums are still relatively new. Teachers are not as confident about what should be taught and what pupils must learn. Pupils' progress through these curriculums falters as a result.

In most subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present new learning effectively to help pupils make links with what they already know. Pupils, including children in the early years, listen attentively in lessons and make the most of learning time. Poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning.

Most subject leaders make effective checks on how well the curriculum is helping pupils to know and remember more. However, in some subjects, leaders are less knowledgeable about how the curriculum is making a difference to pupils'

achievement. This is because these subject leaders are in the early stages of gaining the expertise that they need to lead their subjects with confidence.

The teaching of reading is given a high profile across the school. As soon as children start in the early years, they are immersed in stories, rhymes and poems that develop their early language skills well. Well-trained staff deliver the school's phonics programme effectively. Children in the Reception class, and pupils in key stage 1, have ample time to develop and practise their phonics skills. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they are learning. Staff identify and support pupils who struggle with reading. Older pupils read widely and often. Leaders choose books carefully to foster pupils' love of reading.

Pupils with SEND, including those in the early years and the specially resourced provision, have their needs identified quickly. Leaders ensure that effective support is put in place so that all pupils with SEND have the same opportunities as others to succeed.

Pupils benefit from a well-thought-out programme that promotes their personal development effectively. They learn about different families, faiths and cultures. They are taught how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally.

Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of extra-curricular activities at school. Even though these clubs have been reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders are now steadily reintroducing them. In addition, pupils take part in a wide range of visits and trips to broaden their experiences beyond the academic curriculum. For example, during the inspection, older pupils in key stage 2 attended a performance delivered by a local orchestra. Pupils came back into school buzzing with excitement. This allowed pupils to gain an even greater appreciation for music.

Staff value the support that they receive from senior leaders. They appreciate the consideration that is given to their well-being and workload.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work, including the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors are all fully trained in safeguarding and understand their responsibilities. Staff are alert to the signs of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Leaders work closely with outside agencies and are quick to secure help for pupils and their families when needed. The curriculum supports pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff are new to subject leadership and do not have the confidence or expertise to lead their areas of responsibility effectively. This means they are less able to check how well the curriculum is being implemented or how effectively pupils are remembering their learning. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are supported to lead their curriculum areas successfully.
- Some curriculums are relatively new. They are in the early stages of being implemented. Teachers are less sure about what they should teach in these subjects. This hinders pupils' progress. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the support that they need to deliver the new curriculums effectively.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

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| Unique reference number | 119166 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10210930 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 348 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Phil Heyworth |
| Headteacher | Rachel Tomlinson |
| Website | www.barrowford.lancs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 15 and 16 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for up to eight pupils with SEND. This provision caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All four pupils who access this provision have an education, health and care plan.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior assistant headteacher and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.

- The team inspector met with an external school improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke to staff about safeguarding and their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school, in class and in the outdoor play areas.
- Inspectors talked with parents and carers as they brought their children to school. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into early reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

Inspection team

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|-----------------------------|------------------|
| James Marsh, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Joan Williamson | Ofsted Inspector |
| Karen Bramwell | Ofsted Inspector |

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