

Inspection of a good school: Barrow Hedges Primary School

Harbury Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4LA

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2022

Outcome

Barrow Hedges 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. The school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and well cared for at this large, welcoming school. All staff have the highest expectations of behaviour and pupils meet these well. The school's core values of care, honesty, respect and responsibility are understood and modelled by all.

Leaders expect all pupils to achieve highly. They have clearly defined key learning in every subject. They train staff exceptionally well, so that staff understand the intended learning and how to teach it. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well.

Pupils know what bullying is, but are adamant that it does not happen at their school. They are confident that adults would sort any issues should these occur. They would happily confide in any member of staff with their worries.

Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to enhance learning. Pupils in Year 5 went on a residential trip to France and practised their language skills. There are also residential trips offered in Years 4 and 6, each with a curriculum focus. Pupils take responsibility seriously and can apply for various leadership roles. One example is the 'Horis Hippos', who are older pupils who lead playground activities for their younger peers.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious and exciting curriculum. It is organised so that all pupils remember and build on their learning. For example, in music, leaders have broken down composing techniques into small tasks. Nursery children learn about the broader melodic shapes of familiar songs before singing melodies accurately to pitch in Reception. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are planning and composing two- or four-bar melodic phrases using the pentatonic scale.

Phonics is prioritised and taught from the very start. Staff involve parents and carers with their child's reading by sharing the sounds they are learning. By the end of Nursery Year, many children recognise initial sounds. Pupils read books that closely match the sounds they have learned. Those who need to catch up are supported to do so quickly. This is because all staff are trained to teach phonics expertly. Staff make sure that no time is wasted when helping pupils to read. Leaders continue to promote the importance of phonics throughout the whole school. In Year 4, for instance, pupils use their phonics knowledge to decode unfamiliar words such as 'unforeseen'.

Children begin learning about number, shape and measure in early years. Teachers teach daily focused activities. They break down mathematical learning logically. For example, in Reception Year, children learn to know numbers up to 10 with confidence. This knowledge is needed before children work on number facts looking at 'one more than'. Teachers carefully integrate numbers throughout the early years environment. This means that children have many opportunities to reinforce learning in mathematics across the curriculum.

Teachers check what pupils know. Leaders are introducing new ways to do this. For example, in geography and history, teachers find out what pupils already know and what they would like to know before reflecting on what they have learned. This approach is still under development. In music, non-specialists are expertly guided to teach aspects such as composition. Leaders have rightly identified that the next step is to build teachers' confidence in assessing pupils' composition work.

Leaders set the highest standards of behaviour. They have firmly established routines that pupils consistently follow. Pupils learn well in lessons. They engage fully with their learning and are rarely distracted by poor behaviour. Children in Nursery recently celebrated Chinese New Year. They had a special Chinese banquet and tried to eat noodles with chopsticks. Difference is actively celebrated. Leaders collaborate with parents to help the whole community understand disability. Pupils have deep respect for their peers with SEND. This is a truly inclusive school.

Pupils are offered many opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. For instance, Year 3 pupils are due to attend a performance led by members of a professional orchestra. Staff encourage pupils to get involved with national events such as the Big Garden Birdwatch. Leaders also offer a vast range of extra-curricular clubs at lunchtime and after school. These include many sports, but also clubs for sewing, chess and martial arts. Pupils raise money for several charities. During Down's Syndrome Awareness Week, everyone wears odd socks to raise money to support children and young people with Down's Syndrome.

Staff appreciate the efforts that leaders make to reduce their workload. If activities do not have an impact on pupils' education, they are simply not done. Staff say that the new assessment approaches allow more time to focus on planning and teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety. They have put in place robust systems to identify pupils who may need help or are at risk of abuse. All staff understand these systems and know what signs to look out for. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the help they need.

Pupils are aware of the risks they face. They learn about the dangers of sharing information online. Pupils would tell an adult if they were worried about their safety.

Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding policies and procedures.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Barrow Hedges Primary School, to be good in February 2015.

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 | 145977 |
| Local authority | Sutton |
| Inspection number | 10213875 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 677 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Peter Simpson |
| Headteacher | Louise Wood |
| Website | www.barrowhedgesprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Barrow Hedges Primary School converted to become an academy school with Cirrus Primary Academy Trust in June 2018. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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, other senior leaders and subject leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, music and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' personal development. They also held discussions with several groups of pupils about their views of their school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Alison Colenso, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sophie Healey-Welch

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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