

Inspection of Barham Church of England Primary School

Valley Road, Barham, Barham C of E Primary School, Canterbury, Kent CT4 6NX

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

A deep commitment to every pupil succeeding lies at the heart of this welcoming and joyful school. Pupils are taught the values of thankfulness, compassion, humility, endurance and service, which underpin every aspect of school life. They achieve well and feel safe. As one parent put it, 'Barham is a very nurturing school where pupils are taught by passionate and caring teachers.'

Pupils value kindness. They are exceptionally respectful and kind to each other. As they get older, they act as 'buddies' for younger pupils, offering support on trips and with reading. There is a highly caring culture where bullying is never tolerated. When in need of help, pupils post a note in the 'I want my teacher to know' box. Teachers respond quickly to address any unkindness.

A rich calendar of events and after-school clubs encourages all pupils to develop new talents. They participate enthusiastically in the annual drama production, inter-house music and dance competitions, talent shows and sports clubs. Within the school day, pupils have exceptional opportunities to enjoy a wide range of visits which broaden their experiences. As a result, they develop self-confidence and enter the next stage of their education as mature and responsible young citizens.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious, bespoke curriculum for all subjects in every year group. Their aim is for all pupils to become confident, kind and curious. The curriculum in all subjects is logically set out so pupils are taught knowledge from Reception to Year 6 in the right order. All pupils learn the same curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders want the best for pupils with SEND. They make sure their needs are identified early. Leaders then put accurately focused plans in place so pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. They give staff the training needed to tailor resources to meet pupils' individual needs. Leaders work extremely effectively with parents. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Governors and school leaders inspire curriculum leaders to continually develop their expertise. This means they knowledgeably identify the most important concepts and information pupils must learn and remember and design activities which build memorable links between subjects. Teachers check to make sure pupils can remember key knowledge by using, for example, mini quizzes throughout topics. Pupils are able to recall their learning well in most subjects. However, leaders have identified that pupils do not remember some multiplication facts and spellings as well as they could, and have plans in place to address this.

Leaders actively promote and prioritise reading. Pupils take great enjoyment from the stories their teachers read to them. Reading is taught consistently well. The early reading curriculum is fully developed and begins as soon as pupils start school.

Staff understand how early readers learn and support all pupils well. Teachers' expertise means they notice any pupils falling behind and help them to catch up quickly. The books pupils read match sounds they learn in lessons. Across the curriculum, pupils encounter new vocabulary and its meaning. For example, pupils in Reception Year confidently use the vocabulary of shape, such as circles, triangles and squares.

Opportunities to promote personal development are deeply embedded into the curriculum. Leaders plan many ways for pupils to learn that everyone is valued and equal. For example, a recent upper key stage 2 letter exchange with French pen pals opened pupils' eyes to a different culture. In history, pupils explore issues of equality when learning about the first Black British footballer. They learn to respect that people have different faiths, opinions and families.

Pupils find out about the world of work through visits from local experts in art, literature and archaeology. They see how their classroom learning can be translated into fulfilling careers. The many roles of responsibility, such as eco warriors and worship leaders, help pupils to build character while contributing to school life. Pupils are taught how to care for their physical and mental health. They develop a sense of spiritual awe and wonder through the annual pilgrimage. Pupils enthusiastically describe their long walk through the countryside to find four local churches.

Governors are passionate about offering a broad and inclusive curriculum. They are knowledgeable about their statutory duties. They have a deep commitment to meeting their equality objectives. Governors know the school well, and as a result, they challenge and support leaders very effectively. In turn, leaders support training for teachers and make sure that they keep up to date with the latest research.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are highly visible on the school gate every day. This means they are well placed to confidently pick up on any pupil or family who needs help. All staff know how to report concerns. Leaders respond quickly, keeping a close eye on any pupils who may need additional support.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe while using the internet. They have an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep safe when out and about in the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not always used as effectively as it might be. As a result, some pupils do not recall multiplication tables or spelling facts as fluently as they could.

Leaders should continue implementing their plans for improvement so that pupils fully retain important learning.

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.

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	118653
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10241297
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Tim Hopthrow
Headteacher	Alison Higgins
Website	www.barham.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Canterbury. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in April 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 chair of governors and a representative from Kent local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. 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.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils, reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff and met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge records and actions.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

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