

Inspection of a good school: Barley Close Community Primary School

Barley Close, Mangotsfield, Bristol BS16 9DL

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe. Everyone is welcome. The school sits at the heart of the community. There is a strong family feel. Staff ensure that all children in the early years settle quickly, learn routines and make friends. Throughout the school caring adults are on hand to provide pupils with any emotional support they require. If pupils fall out, staff are quick to help them resolve any disagreements.

Pupils' physical and mental health are a top priority. Pupils enjoy what they call 'the daily mile' and that they can attend yoga lessons. A highlight for many is learning to swim in the school's own pool. Lessons start in Reception and continue year-on-year. There are a range of clubs such as forest school and athletics.

There is a sharp focus on raising pupils' aspirations. Examples include attending workshops at a local university and learning from firefighters and sportspersons about perseverance and achieving personal goals. Enterprise projects teach pupils about money.

Pupils study a broad range of subjects. However, there are weaknesses in some aspects of the curriculum that pupils receive. Staff's expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave vary. At times, pupils lose concentration in lessons.

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

Leaders are working systematically to improve the quality of education pupils receive. Recently, they have reorganised the school timetable to ensure that pupils spend enough time on each subject over time. Leaders use the external support and advice they receive well. For example, staff teams are revamping subject curriculums effectively. As a result, most subject curriculums now include all the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order they need to learn it in. Some of these subject curriculums are at an early stage of

implementation. Increasingly, staff prioritise the teaching of the subject-specific vocabulary that pupils should know.

In the recent past, some pupils did not master essential subject content. Leaders are ensuring that staff are addressing pupils' gaps in knowledge head-on. However, they are only part way through this work. For example, in mathematics, the teaching of multiplication tables is now much more explicit. The strong focus on number fluency is enabling pupils to know key mathematical facts and to recall them quickly and more accurately. However, teaching is not yet addressing some pupils' knowledge gaps in how to reason in mathematics sufficiently well.

The consistent approach to teaching early reading across the school is paying off. Pupils who need to catch up receive extra teaching. Staff ensure that pupils' reading books match the sounds that pupils already know. Pupils have lots of opportunities to read aloud. Pupils' reading accuracy and fluency is improving as a result. Children in Reception gain a love of stories right from the start. They are keeping up with the phonics programme well.

Nonetheless, there are some weaknesses in the implementation of subject curriculums. Leaders have not ensured that all staff have strong subject knowledge in all the subjects they teach. Teaching does not always build on what pupils already know. When this happens, staff do not address pupils' misconceptions swiftly. Sometimes pupils do not have sufficient practice to secure new learning across sequences of work.

Leaders are ensuring that staff apply consistent teaching approaches for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff provide practical resources and use a range of communication aids to support learning. Pupils have achievable short-term targets. Specialist support, such as speech and language therapy, is in place for those who need it.

Poor behaviour is reducing markedly. However, some staff still do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. When pupils misbehave at social times, or they are disrespectful lining up at the end of lunchtime, a minority of staff do not address this in line with the agreed policies and guidance. Leaders are stringent in monitoring pupils' attendance.

The curriculum ensures that pupils learn about equality, diversity and life in modern Britain. The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of different religions and their festivals well.

Leaders consider staff's workload when they are making decisions. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ask pertinent questions about the use of any additional funding and its impact on the improving the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All safer recruitment checks are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. There is effective pastoral support for the most vulnerable pupils and families. Staff receive ongoing safeguarding training. They know how and when to report concerns should they suspect pupils are potentially at risk of harm. Leaders act on any concerns swiftly and work closely with external agencies when necessary.

Pupils feel safe in school. The curriculum teaches them how to keep safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff's expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and social times vary. Low-level disruption occurs in some lessons. When pupils misbehave at lunchtime some staff do not address this swiftly. Leaders must ensure that all staff maintain high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct and the school's behaviour policy is implemented consistently well.
- There are weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum across classes and subjects. Pupils have gaps in knowledge and need to catch up across the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that staff implement the intended curriculum consistently well across all subjects so that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Staff subject knowledge is not consistently strong in some subjects. This limits pupils' ability to secure the essential subject content. Leaders must ensure that all staff have strong subject knowledge in the subjects they teach.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

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	109047
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10240762
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Shaw
Headteacher	Jo Williams
Website	www.barleycloseschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a before-school and after-school club. During the school holidays there is a full-time holiday club for pupils.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, school leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and other staff. She also met with three representatives of the governing body and held conversations with representatives of South Gloucestershire local authority education team.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to children about their learning and looked at samples of work.

- The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation and discussed safeguarding with leaders and other staff.
- In making her judgements, the inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. They also looked at the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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