

Inspection of Barrow Hall Community Primary School

Sophia Drive, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 3TX

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Children in early years, and pupils in key stages 1 and 2, excel in their learning and prosper at Barrow Hall Community Primary School. They live up to leaders' high expectations. Pupils achieve exceptionally well and become confident, articulate learners. They develop a deep knowledge of curriculum subjects because they are supported very ably by staff. Pupils are thrilled with their new learning. They explain their knowledge clearly and accurately, often using complex words and concepts.

Pupils meet the high bar that leaders set for their behaviour. They are self-controlled and act with much care and consideration for others. Their conduct in lessons, on corridors and outdoors is exemplary. If bullying should happen, leaders resolve such incidents very effectively.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), feel safe and are happy. They feel respected, included and have many friends at this school. They have high regard for other people. Many pupils told inspectors that they learn not to judge what other people say, or any disabilities that they may have.

Pupils develop their individual talents and interests incredibly well. They profit from leaders' exceptionally well-designed enrichment programme. For example, most pupils attend extra-curricular clubs, such as basketball, drama and choir. Pupils in key stage 2 undertake rewarding residential trips, for instance to outdoor activity centres.

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

Leaders have established respect and ambition at the heart of this very successful school. Everyone is welcome and included fully. Leaders have an excellent understanding of what constitutes an outstanding education offer so that pupils excel academically, socially and emotionally. Senior and middle leaders guide, support and enable staff exceptionally well to achieve leaders' ambitious vision.

Pupils, including those with SEND, experience a wonderful education. They learn the curriculum knowledge that they need to know, and they achieve impressively well. Pupils gain this remarkable foundation for their future lives because leaders seek only the best for pupils.

Leaders make certain that, in each subject, the content of the curriculum is very well thought out. They identify the key knowledge, including vocabulary, that pupils will learn and the order in which this should be taught. Leaders draw on their careful thinking about the curriculum, including findings from up-to-date educational research. Their curriculum is also steeped in the history of the former Burtonwood United States Air Force base, on which the school buildings are now located.

Staff teach leaders' intended curriculum with skill and passion. They provide learning activities that engage pupils deeply in their studies. Teachers draw on their first-rate subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach, guided by expert leaders.

Teachers review whether pupils have learned and understood what they have been taught. Teachers adapt learning activities and address gaps in pupils' knowledge very effectively. Pupils remember their learning and understand the connections between essential concepts and ideas. Pupils use the excellent vocabulary that they have learned, to explain their knowledge with maturity and fluency.

Taught by expert staff, pupils learn phonics quickly and securely. Leaders ensure that those pupils who find reading more difficult receive the frequent, individual help that they need to catch up with their peers. Pupils read with speed, accuracy and expression.

Pupils across the school share a love of reading. Beginning in the Reception Year, staff read high-quality stories and poems to pupils often. Pupils enthuse about the work of a range of playwrights, authors and poets. They read a wide range of literature with understanding.

Leaders ensure that teachers identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND, as well as the barriers to their learning, quickly and accurately. Teachers make sure that these pupils have the support that they need to learn the content of the curriculum exceptionally well. Leaders ensure that all pupils have access to the same wide-ranging learning and social opportunities. Pupils with SEND thrive. They feel included and experience success academically and in other aspects of school life.

Leaders shape the curriculum carefully to make sure that children in early years learn and achieve very well. Children become confident and communicative. They develop considerable knowledge across all areas of learning. For example, they develop an in-depth appreciation of books and numbers. They learn how to manage their own emotions and how to physically move their bodies with skill and control. Children develop a rich appreciation of language, including an impressive knowledge of Spanish.

Pupils are polite, extremely considerate and sensible. Their excellent behaviour contributes to the calm feeling evident around the school. Staff are able to focus on teaching the curriculum in lessons.

Pupils develop feelings of self-worth, empathy and a sense of belonging. Leaders ensure that pupils develop a deep understanding of, and respect for, the differences between people and communities. Leaders arrange a wealth of well-considered opportunities to develop pupils' wider knowledge and to inspire them, for instance through theatre visits. Staff prepare pupils very well for the many opportunities and responsibilities of life. For example, pupils develop an exceptional understanding of their environmental responsibilities.

Governors have a detailed understanding of the work of the school. They make highly effective use of their expertise to challenge and support leaders.

Leaders communicate very well with parents and carers, who are highly satisfied with leaders' work. Likewise, leaders engage widely with staff. They are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Members of staff described Barrow Hall Community Primary School as a wonderful place to work. They told inspectors that leaders recognise and nurture their individual needs, skills and educational passions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn to keep themselves safe online as well as at the school and in the community. They learn to respect one another's bodies and privacy.

Senior leaders have established a 'stay safe team' so that pupils and staff can share any safeguarding concerns easily. Leaders provide staff with frequent training on safeguarding. They check thoroughly how well staff understand their responsibilities. Leaders' and staff's recording of potential concerns about pupils is clear, factual and detailed.

Leaders review safeguarding information carefully and liaise with other agencies, such as social care services, quickly and appropriately. Leaders understand how to respond if safeguarding concerns were to arise about any adult at the school.

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	111234
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10211971
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	647
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Forrest
Headteacher	John Littler
Website	www.barrowhall.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Approximately half of the staff are new to the school since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, geography, design and technology and history. They met with leaders and teachers, visited learning activities, spoke with some pupils and reviewed examples of pupils' work. The inspectors also reviewed information about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector observed pupils read to familiar staff. He spoke with some pupils about their reading.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of staff, including early career teachers and their mentors, about working at the school. The inspectors evaluated responses from school staff to Ofsted’s online survey.
- The inspectors considered responses from pupils to the Ofsted online survey and spoke with groups of pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- An inspector met with a representative from the local authority and spoke by telephone with the school’s external adviser.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors considered the views of pupils and parents and spoke with leaders and staff. They also checked a sample of leaders’ records and policies.
- On the first day of the inspection, an inspector spoke by telephone with the chair of governors to discuss governance of the school. On the second day of the inspection, the lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and another governor who both attended remotely.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Kate Bowker	His Majesty’s Inspector
Peter Berry	Ofsted Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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