

# Inspection of Barrow 1618 C of E Free School

Barrow, Broseley, Shropshire TF12 5BW

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

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

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 seven years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 14 June 2022. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Barrow 1618 CofE Free School is like one big family and pupils say it is, 'all about friendship here'. As the school motto states, the pupils here grow with faith, friendship and courage.

Pupils attend this happy, welcoming school regularly. They try hard, behave well and are kind and caring towards others. They feel safe and know that adults will sort out any problems if they arise.

Staff and governors are passionate about providing the very best for all pupils and work very hard to do so. They share a vision that this school will develop the 'whole child'. There are positive relationships between pupils and staff here. As a result, pupils are confident, prepared to take risks and achieve well. They express their views, ideas and opinions clearly and with sensitivity.

Pupils love learning both indoors and out. The school offers many valuable and exciting opportunities for learning outdoors and making use of the enviable school setting. Whether it is working alongside the flock of ducks in Reception or exploring the local woodland during forest school sessions, pupils relish these opportunities.

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

In recent years, the school has carefully reviewed and developed the curriculum. It is broad, ambitious and designed to give pupils what they need for their next steps in education.

In mathematics, pupils follow a well-structured programme and become confident problem-solvers. They use key vocabulary very well when explaining their methods. Teachers pick up on misconceptions quickly. They focus on pupils' instant recall of important number facts, such as times tables. This helps pupils solve problems more efficiently.

The curriculum in English is well designed, setting out explicitly the expectations in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. Pupils become skilled, enthusiastic readers. Their writing, in English and across the curriculum, sometimes varies in quality in terms of handwriting, spelling and punctuation. This is because teachers do not always set high enough expectations.

In a small number of subjects, including history, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of implementation. Pupils say they enjoy history and that teachers make it interesting. However, the school has not checked carefully enough how well pupils are retaining and connecting the information they learn. This means that the school has not been able to develop and improve these subjects as effectively as they could.

Staff are determined that no pupil is left out or left behind. They identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well. They provide extra support, resources and adapt activities so that all pupils can access the full curriculum.

Staff are experts at teaching early reading and phonics. They do this in a highly structured and consistent way. As a result, children in the early years quickly learn the sounds that letters make and become very skilled at blending them together. There is real rigour in the way in which staff ensure that children do not fall behind. Staff provide successful additional phonics sessions to prevent this from happening.

Pupils become fluent, proficient readers who read regularly. They also enjoy hearing the books that teachers read to them in daily reading sessions. The new library and newly appointed pupil 'reading influencers' provide opportunities to further promote a love of reading.

Provision in the early years is exceptional. Children get off to a super start, quickly becoming confident, independent learners. Relationships are highly positive and children feel safe and happy. Adults know the children very well and design and adapt activities to ensure children learn what is most useful to them. Both indoors and outdoors, the learning environment is engaging and purposeful. The outdoor area is meticulously organised. Every inch provides engaging and meaningful opportunities that promote children's learning.

The curriculum extends beyond the academic in many ways. Considering the size of school, pupils get an extensive choice of clubs, trips and activities at playtimes and after school. They become school councillors, 'activity starters' and 'sports bronze ambassadors'. They learn about staying safe in the real world and online. The curriculum and assemblies are helping them develop an understanding of diversity, equality and fundamental British values, including democracy.

Governors and leaders have a shared strategic vision, passion and drive to make this school as good as it can be. They know the school well and what needs working on to improve it further. Staff enjoy working here and feel very supported by one another and by leaders. There is a real team spirit at Barrow 1618 C of E Free School.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' written work. This means that sometimes pupils' work is inaccurate and contains grammatical or spelling errors. The school must ensure that teachers, in line with

school policy, have consistently high expectations of the work pupils produce. This will help to ensure that pupils consistently produce high-quality written work with attention to accuracy.

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not fully implemented curriculum improvements as effectively as in other subjects. This means that pupils do not retain as much knowledge as they could. The school should implement planned improvements and review these subjects so that pupils' learning becomes as effective as those subjects which are fully embedded.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 138268   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Shropshire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10290589   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy free school  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 96   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Carolyn Jones  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Anita Ward   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.barrow1618school.co.uk">www.barrow1618school.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 14 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                    |

## Information about this school

- Barrow 1619 C of E Free School opened in 2012.
- There has been a change of headteacher since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection was on 11 October 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school offers childcare before and after school. This is managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the second routine inspection following the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector held meetings with the headteacher and those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, English and history. For each deep, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including governors' minutes, school improvement plans and the school's website.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

### **Inspection team**

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Susan Ray

Ofsted Inspector

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