

Inspection of a good school: Barlow CofE Primary School

Millcross Lane, Barlow, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 7TA

Inspection dates:

15 February 2024

Outcome

Barlow CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend Barlow C of E Primary School. In lessons, they keenly follow well-established routines. They enjoy learning and try hard. At playtimes, pupils play together in the well-equipped outdoor space. In daily collective worship, they learn about values and diversity. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on these values and make links to their own behaviour.

Pupils are confident and polite. They say that they feel safe and cared for at the school. Staff prioritise getting to know the pupils very well. They support pupils to develop resilience and communication skills. Staff make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get all the support that they need to take part in all the same activities as their peers.

The school offers all pupils a wide variety of memorable experiences. Pupils appreciate the activities they take part in at the forest school. There are opportunities for all pupils to go on visits and take part in sporting competitions. Pupils in key stage two enjoy residential trips where they engage in outdoor activities. Many pupils eagerly take on responsibilities as librarians, mini-leaders or being part of the school council.

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

The school has worked hard to plan a rich and ambitious curriculum. Staff have thought carefully about the knowledge that they want pupils to learn across the full range of subjects. This knowledge is effectively sequenced so that pupils build on what they already know to deepen their understanding over time. Staff work together to make sure that the curriculum matches pupils' interests and broadens their understanding of the world they live in. For example, in art lessons pupils learn to appreciate the work of artists from around the world while developing their own techniques. In English lessons, pupils read from a well-chosen range of texts that includes stories, poems, and non-fiction. In the early years, the curriculum is designed to make sure that children develop the skills they need to be ready for key stage one.

Staff have excellent subject knowledge. They provide pupils with clear explanations and they plan interesting lessons, making good use of resources. For example, in mathematics lessons pupils routinely use apparatus and diagrams which help them to explore new concepts. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to recall and practise what they have learned previously. This helps them to learn knowledge securely and develop fluency. Staff make sure that pupils learn subject-specific vocabulary so that they can understand and discuss what they are learning. For example, children in the early years learn to describe shapes using mathematical terms correctly.

Staff are quick to identify when pupils need extra support. They adapt activities well so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can access the same learning opportunities as their peers.

In some areas, the curriculum is still very new. Staff routinely reflect on how effectively it is delivered. They continue to develop these areas to make sure that learning activities focus sharply on the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. In some foundation subjects, the school has not yet established routines for checking how securely pupils can remember what they have learned.

The school has recently adopted a new programme for phonics. Phonics teaching begins in the early years where children quickly learn to recognise and blend sounds. Staff check pupils' reading knowledge often and make sure that all pupils practise reading from books that match their stage of reading. Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils enthusiastically talk about books they have read.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They enjoy the rewards they receive for demonstrating the school's values. When incidents of poor behaviour do happen, staff help pupils reflect on their actions and regulate their emotions. Pupils trust staff to resolve situations quickly and fairly.

There is a well-planned curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They learn how to take care of their physical and mental health. Pupils develop mature attitudes. They are being well-prepared for their next stages in education and beyond.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They say that they are well supported to manage their workload and enjoy opportunities to develop their expertise. The school is well supported by its governors. They know the school very well and play an active role in continuing to support the school to develop all aspects of its provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has recently developed the curriculum to make sure that it meets the needs of all pupils. In some subjects, curriculum plans are new and not yet firmly embedded. The school has not yet established systems for checking how securely pupils can remember what they have learned in all subjects. The school needs to make sure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well and that there are robust systems in place to check that pupils can remember what they have learned.

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 September 2018.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

Unique reference number	112798
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10324068
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Barnes
Headteacher	Penny Watkin
Website	www.barlow.derbyshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England School. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2019. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and other representatives of the governing body.
- The lead inspector discussed the school with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, spoke to teachers,

spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors visited lessons in reading and mathematics. The lead inspector listened to children reading to a member of staff.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector/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.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of teaching and non-teaching staff and considered staff views expressed through the online survey.
- Inspectors met with some parents and considered the responses to OFSTED Parent View.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Davies

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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