

# Inspection of Barley Lane School

Barley Lane, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon EX4 1TA

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Barley Lane is a calm and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe. Pupils are positive about the care they receive and how staff accept them as individuals. They appreciate how staff listen to them and give them the help they need to manage their emotions successfully. Pupils are adamant that staff treat them with respect and understand them. This means that when pupils have incidents of challenging behaviour, they feel they always have a fresh start.

The school wants pupils to be successful learners. However, the quality of education is not good. In some subjects, the school is not clear about the key knowledge and skills it wants pupils to know and remember. This means, they do not build a deep understanding of these subjects. Also, in some subjects, staff do not have secure subject knowledge to enable pupils to learn successfully.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They show positive attitudes to their learning and during social times. The school works tirelessly to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

There is a wealth of additional experiences for pupils, including kayaking, climbing and music. This enables pupils to develop their confidence well.

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

The school's values, 'ready, respectful and safe,' are at the core of its work. As soon as pupils start at the school, staff make sure they feel safe and are ready to learn. The school ensures pupils know that despite any individual challenges they might face, everyone has something to offer and learn.

The school are rightly proud of the impressive relationships they build with pupils and their families. Staff place significant importance on knowing each individual pupil well. This means they can quickly spot any potential triggers that can increase pupils' anxious behaviours. As a result, pupils are extremely well supported, and they behave well. Luna, the therapy dog is a firm favourite with pupils as she helps them to be calm and ready to learn.

The curriculum is planned to link to pupils' developmental stages. However, while the school does demonstrate an understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve across the curriculum, the pace of change has not been quick enough. Monitoring and evaluation are not securely in place. This means pupils do not benefit from a high-quality education. Staff subject knowledge continues to be underdeveloped since the last inspection. This hinders the progress pupils make.

The school understands the importance of pupils learning to read fluently. There is a programme in place that is developing their reading with success. The school provides pupils with daily opportunities to hone and develop their reading fluency. Pupils are enthusiastic about the development of the library and the range of books

available. This is developing in pupils an understanding of the importance of reading and also how reading can bring enjoyment. As a result, they like reading and many read well. Those in need of support get extra time to practice, which is enabling them to begin to catch up.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development. They are taught how to form positive and healthy relationships, how to keep safe and to value the opinions of others, even if they are different to their own.

The school provides pupils with carefully designed opportunities to support their interests and talents and to become active citizens. They have rich experiences including caving, raft-building and archery. In addition, they enjoy attending 'Sound Communities' and engaging in community projects such as, 'art graffiti'. These activities increase pupils' independence and help develop their leadership and communication skills, which prepares them well for their future destinations. The careers programme supports pupils to experience the world of work, such as construction, hospitality and barbering. This develops their self-awareness and self-confidence.

Parents are happy with the school. They welcome the support and guidance their children receive and the way the school sees the potential for them to succeed.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, the school is not clear about the key knowledge and skills it wants pupils to know. As a result, pupils do not build a deep understanding of these subjects. The school must complete the work it has started to ensure that all subjects identify the key knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and revisit as they progress through the curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluation are underdeveloped. This means the school does not have an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of some aspects of its work. This is hampering the progress the school is making. The school must ensure that all aspects of the school's work is robustly monitored and evaluated in order to put in place support and adaptations for pupils as necessary.
- In some subjects, staff do not have sufficient subject knowledge to implement aspects of the curriculum effectively. This means pupils do not learn as successfully as they should. The school must ensure staff develop the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113636
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322209
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Elizabeth Shinn and Helen Crossfield (co-chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Jones
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.barleylaneschool.org.uk">www.barleylaneschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Barley Lane School is a foundation special school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils also have a range of additional special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school makes use of four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- The lead inspector sampled pupils' work in English, science, history, geography and personal, social and health education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered key documentation, including school development plans and governors' minutes.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. The inspectors met with school leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text replies.

## **Inspection team**

Jen Southall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Simons

Ofsted Inspector

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