



Barnett Wood Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124982
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 281851
Inspection date 28 September 2006
Reporting inspector George Rayner

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant	School address	Barnett Wood Lane
School category	Community		Ashtead
Age range of pupils	4-7		KT21 2DF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01372 272701
Number on roll (school)	148	Fax number	01372 272701
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr Dai Morris
		Headteacher	Mrs Norma Penny
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2000		

Age group 4-7	Inspection date 28 September 2006	Inspection number 281851
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Smaller than most, this school is located in a village on the outskirts of Leatherhead. The proportion of pupils coming from minority ethnic groups is slightly below average and few are at an early stage of speaking English. Standards on entry to the Foundation stage are above average. A low proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Their socio-economic circumstances are generally advantaged. The school has Investors in People status and a Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Parents agree. Several praised its community ethos and made comments such as, 'A wonderful, much loved school'. The headteacher's exceptional leadership is based on a very clear view that the personal and emotional development of pupils is vitally important to their academic achievement. She ensures that pupils' needs are fully met through her very strong leadership of teaching and learning. The buildings and outside areas provide a wonderfully stimulating learning environment that gives pleasure to the pupils and helps motivate them.

The quality of care provided for pupils is outstanding. Pupils respond exceptionally well to all of their learning opportunities, and say that they are very happy in the school. They explain confidently why they need to eat healthily, take exercise, and be careful in certain situations. They respond very enthusiastically to the many opportunities they are given to contribute to the work of the school and to the wider community.

Excellent teamwork between well qualified and experienced staff ensures that provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Consequently, children make really rapid progress. By the time they move into Year 1, most exceed the goals normally expected of five year olds. In Years 1 and 2, the excellent teaching and pupils' exceptional personal development contribute strongly to their outstanding achievement. In most years pupils in Year 2 reach very high levels in the National Curriculum assessments, and the work of current group of Year 2 pupils shows they are well on track to achieve similar standards.

Teachers make sure that all pupils are given really challenging work, while at the same time making sure that help is available for anyone who might need it. Teachers rigorously check on the progress made by their pupils. They use the information they gather extremely well to focus on those who need extra guidance. The curriculum is excellent. Teachers provide their pupils with a very wide range of experiences to help broaden their education.

The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate, and clearly identifies what needs to be done next to build on its already considerable strengths. The rigour with which this is done amply demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for yet further improvement. The headteacher provides the drive and vision behind the school's success. The staff and governors support her extremely well. However, the school's contingency plans are not as sharp as they could be in preparing staff to deputise for the headteacher should she be absent for any extended period.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make clear plans to ensure that staff are thoroughly prepared and able to provide high quality cover in the event of the headteacher's absence.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Although the levels of attainment of children entering Reception are generally above average, the small number in each year group means that there can be year-on-year fluctuations. Children's progress is outstanding because highly effective opportunities to learn through play and exploration ensure that their independence and ability to communicate with each other build extremely well from their starting points.

The 2006 assessment results for Year 2 show that standards in reading and mathematics were slightly lower than in previous years, although still well above average. This occurred because there were more pupils than usual with learning difficulties in this year group. Nonetheless, the pupils made outstanding progress from their lower starting points. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make excellent progress because the school is highly effective in meeting their needs. Learning support assistants play a key role in this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the improvements made to the outside areas, many of the most attractive and creative developments were suggested by pupils, such as the quiet places for reflection and the toys that encourage the use of imagination. All pupils grow vegetables in the school garden and a group of them spoke enthusiastically about how they harvested and cooked theirs. Older pupils show great maturity when working in teams, keeping the grounds tidy, and using recycled water to care for plants. Their experience of teamwork and the practical skills learned contribute strongly to their academic progress and give them an exceptionally good platform for the next stage of their education and the future world of work.

Pupils show great enthusiasm for school, as evident in the above average rate of attendance. Many show their commitment to healthy lifestyles by coming to school on bicycles or scooters, or walking at least some of the way. In the school swimming pool, they show that they know how to be safe in and near water. Pupils willingly take part in many activities in the local community. The children regularly perform to the local community.

The expertise of staff has been used to ensure that pupils' have a good awareness of different cultures within society. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they show real consideration for each other. They are confident and enthusiastic when welcoming visitors, and they enjoy talking about their work and successes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers provide a rich variety of stimulating activities and highly appropriate challenges that ensure all pupils make excellent progress. The impact of their outstanding personal development on their learning was clearly illustrated in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils' concentrated hard and stuck at their tasks as they worked to improve their punctuation.

The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils are keenly aware of this and say it helps their learning a lot. They particularly appreciate the way in which teachers make lessons exciting and show them how to improve. Teachers and teaching assistants work together extremely well to provide a high level of individual monitoring and support. Training has significantly enhanced the assistants' effectiveness in contributing to lesson planning and pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provides a very wide range of experiences for pupils, both inside and outside of lessons. In addition there is a highly effective programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school is constantly looking for ways to improve an already excellent curriculum, and is now examining the ways in which it can become even better at integrating all of the key areas of learning in lessons.

Extra curricular clubs are so well attended that some have to be split into two groups to accommodate all who want to attend. The school's commitment to high quality experiences for pupils is shown through its use of coaches from leading professional sports clubs. The expert teaching provided in the school's own swimming pool is highly valued by pupils and parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils report feeling extremely safe and well cared for. They benefit from the very high commitment of the school in ensuring this. All procedures are carried out with great diligence. Staff regularly update their first-aid training. The school carries out robust health and safety audits, under local authority guidance and acts very effectively on the findings. This has for example, had a significant impact on safety in the playground, when car parking arrangements were changed to ensure vehicles and pupils are entirely segregated.

Comprehensive records are kept of each pupil's progress. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that all pupils are making the progress that they should, and there is a clear procedure for giving extra help where needed. Teaching assistants are especially effective in this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The staff's shared vision for the school includes a determination to become even better than at the last inspection, when almost all aspects were at least very good and many were judged to be excellent. This has been key to the school's continuing improvement and pupils' high levels of academic and personal achievement. Governors are highly skilled, capable and involved. Relationships with parents and carers are excellent. Parents have a very high opinion of the headteacher and her staff. The school says it has a wonderful group of parents who provide tremendous help, for example in doing much of the work in improving the outside areas.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures include regular lesson observations. Following these, staff are given clear guidance on how to improve further. The views of pupils and parents' are regularly sought and acted on. The advice given by local authority consultants is used well. Consequently, the school has a view of its performance that accurately points it towards ways in which it can sustain and further build upon its strengths. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is modest in some respects, and reflects its refusal to be satisfied with what has already been achieved.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit. I especially enjoyed the way so many of you told me how much you love your school.

It was clear from my visit that yours is an outstanding school. This means that it is very good indeed. Even though it is really good, your headteacher is determined that it will become even better. All of the other adults in the school help her very well indeed. The only thing that I thought could be even better was that the school needs to make sure that other staff can carry on just as well if the headteacher is ever away for a long time. To do this, they need to be sure about what jobs they will have to do and to be trained to do them as well as the headteacher does.

The outside areas of your school are among the best I have ever seen. The school is very pleased that some of the best ideas for improving these came from you. It is also very grateful for all the help that your parents gave, because it could not have done it without them. The school thinks the outside areas are very important, because they give you such good opportunities to become grown up and do things for yourself. I saw that this is happening very well indeed. For example, I saw some of you working in teams to keep it tidy and pleasant. You did a very good job without needing an adult to tell you what to do.

Your excellent personal development and behaviour are important reasons why you do so well in all of your subjects. Teachers give you lots of interesting things to do, that really stretch you, and you work very hard to do them well. The adults make sure that anybody who needs extra help gets it. As well as all the great things in the classroom, you have some excellent clubs. It was really good to hear that so many of you go to these that they have to put on extra sessions. Your professional football coaches make sure that you have the very best football teaching and I know that you love having your own swimming pool and are proud that you learn to swim well.

Very well done to you all.

George Rayner

Lead Inspector