

# Barnes Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108756
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	288179
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Honoree Gordon HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julia Belshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	Mount Road Barnes Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR4 7QF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5535962
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5535965

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors.

## Description of the school

Barnes Infant school is a large school situated on the outskirts of Sunderland. The school draws on some areas of considerable social deprivation. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who do not have English as first language, is slightly higher than average for this local authority. Most pupils join the school at Nursery age, but a number come from other providers of Nursery education. The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is in line with, or is a little above, that which is usually found.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Barnes Infant school is a good school with some outstanding features. The curriculum is particularly well-tailored to respond to the children's needs and interests. The range of opportunities and activities offered and the high quality of the relationships between the staff and the children promote their personal development extremely well. As a result, the children are happy, keen to learn and enjoy school. One parent's comment summed this up very aptly: 'my son skips to school every morning and has complete respect for his teachers.' The teaching is good and, consequently, the children make good progress and standards are consistently above average. The Foundation Stage is outstanding, providing an excellent start to coming to school and a message right from the outset that learning can be fun.

Care, guidance and support for the pupils are good, with some excellent features, such as the nurture group for vulnerable pupils, the encouragement to the children to take responsibility for how they are learning and the ways in which the school involves parents and the community in what it is doing. Not all parents are clear, however, on how much is being done to look after their children, despite newsletters home and good procedures in place to help safeguard the children. A small minority of parents, for example, expressed concerns over how behaviour in the playground is managed and, where incidents occur, how well these are resolved.

The headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher, is eager to take on board any ways in which she can improve the school still further and ensure that parents feel reassured about how their children are looked after. She leads the school well, with great enthusiasm and vision. The parents' questionnaires and comments show that they appreciate the good-quality education that their children are receiving. What is most striking about the school is the confidence and independence of the children at such a young age and their co-operation, one with another. The school takes great care to listen to the children's views.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Closely monitor lunchtime and break behaviour to promote the comfort and well-being of all the children.
- Explore additional means of ensuring good dialogue between home and school over any areas of concern.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and the trend in results continues to rise. The standards that the children reach at the end of Year 2 are above the national average in all aspects and the school expects them to remain so in this year's tests. The school fosters the development of language well; the children are confident speakers. There has been an improvement in writing skills following an emphasis on this. Children in the Foundation Stage also make very good progress and are on track to reach or exceed their goals this summer.

All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, do well. A good proportion of the more able pupils gain high grades. Generally, the girls do a little better than the boys; this mirrors the national picture, but in mathematics they do equally well. The school's assessment systems help teachers to focus on individuals or particular groups of children

who could do even better. At some points, the children are grouped by ability, allowing the pace of learning to suit each group.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development of the children is outstanding because the curriculum offers such good opportunities for developing their skills, their confidence and their enthusiasm for learning. This prepares them particularly well for when they move on to junior school. The school provides well for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An assembly observed on the theme of forgiveness ended most movingly with the enthusiastic singing of a song in an African language, obviously a firm favourite with the children. The various projects that the children get involved in open up their eyes and ears to the big world beyond where they live. The school promotes healthy eating and learning activities at all ages, which help to develop the children's emotional well-being. The children are sociable and they play and work together cooperatively. There are very good opportunities for them to express their views, including through the school council. The good listening skills, fluency and, at such a tender age, empathy of the representatives who talked to the inspector were impressive. Behaviour in lessons is excellent. The inspector observed behaviour in the playground and found that this was good, with good levels of adult supervision and a good range of games to play. However, mindful of the concerns expressed by some parents, the school has been asked to keep a close eye on this. Attendance is satisfactory; the school is working hard to promote this further.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned, with imaginative and interesting activities, often varied to suit the children's different abilities. Teachers make good use of information and communication technologies to motivate the children and to explain teaching points. The children are keen to learn and are being helped to develop the ability to think for themselves and to understand how they are doing. In the Foundation Stage, children are engaged in a range of enjoyable learning experiences, skilfully guided and supported by staff as they lead their own learning. This is managed very effectively, as observed in one of the Reception classes, where pupils organised themselves without fuss and with patience to do the learning activities that they really wanted to do. An effective system to assess their progress runs through this. In the Nursery, teachers make very good use of rhyme and song to help develop language. Teachers make and take opportunities in the lessons to encourage children to express their feelings and views. In this way, their confidence and social skills grow and their command of language develops well.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is excellent. It is rich and varied, with a very good range of lunchtime and after-school activities, often arising from pupils' suggestions through the 'Wacky Wishing-well'. In the Foundation Stage, the Early Learning goals are all linked together most effectively. Older pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed not just in specific lessons, but across other subjects, too. The school's longstanding involvement in initiatives like the Arts Council project

to promote creativity, not only introduces new activities, such as working with glass or learning about African music, but provides good opportunities for bringing in children and their families to enjoy learning together. As the curriculum extends, the staff gain too from working with other schools and professionals, bringing fresh ideas and energy into the school. The curriculum is focused on developing independent learners and in this it is particularly successful, fostering enjoyment in learning, confidence and social skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The children are well cared for. The school meets requirements for safeguarding, health and safety. There are good systems for tracking the children's progress and for helping them to settle into school or to make the transfer to junior school. Parents are encouraged to get involved in learning activities, projects and visits. The school makes good efforts to include and help a small number of children who have challenging behaviour. Some children who are having particular difficulties at school benefit from a small nurture group known as the Rainbow Group. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and, though sometimes there is some silly behaviour at playtimes, that they know who to approach if they are worried and that any incidents are dealt with. So, although children say, 'there are some bullies' they know that the school does not tolerate this and they are clear about the school rules on this. The vast majority of parents are very happy with how behaviour is managed, but a few need further reassurance.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Systems for self-evaluation are thorough, showing good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. Appropriate priorities and plans for the future have been set; for example, to further develop the achievement of some groups of children such as those for whom English is not first language. The school enjoys strong support from its parents and has forged good links with other schools and agencies to support its work. The expertise from the Foundation Stage is shared throughout the local authority. A high priority is given to developing staff and the outcomes of this can be seen in consistently above average achievement and in a lively, happy school where the children blossom and where those with difficulties, or who are more vulnerable, can feel included in all that the school does.



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	2
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	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

28 March 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Barnes Infant School, Tyne and Wear, SR4 7QF

I am writing to thank you for all your help when I came to visit your school. A big thank you to the members of the school council and the girls who showed me round. I was able to talk to a lot of you and I also got to meet a few of your parents and to find out their views about your school, too.

Here is what I think.

- Barnes Infant is a good school and some bits of it are super!
- You are all doing well and you try very hard in your lessons.
- You speak out nice and clearly.
- Your behaviour is excellent!
- Your test results are good.
- Your teachers make the lessons really interesting and fun.
- You have lots of exciting things to do and a chance to try new things.
- All the adults take good care of you.
- Mrs Belshaw is a good headteacher.

You told me that you enjoy school and that you feel safe there. You told me also that there were some bullies, but that the teachers deal with this and that you know who to tell if anything happens. I did not see any silliness when I was there, but just to be sure, I have asked Mrs Belshaw to check that you are all okay in the playground.

You told me all about the school council. I think this is a great idea because it means Mrs Belshaw knows what you think, what you like and what might make the school even better.

So, well done everybody!

Mrs H Gordon

Her Majesty's Inspector