



# Barnwell Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108809  
**Local Authority** Sunderland  
**Inspection number** 288194  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** John Heap

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>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Whitefield Estate
<b>School category</b>	Community		Penshaw, Houghton le Spring
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Tyne and Wear, DH4 7RT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 6578
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	261	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 553 6579
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Amanda Shale
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Foster
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5–6 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288194
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average-sized school serves an area with little disadvantage. A broadly average proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very few pupils are learning English as an additional language. A similarly small number are in the care of the local authority. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Since the last inspection the school has gone through a turbulent period caused by:

- a delay in the permanent appointment of senior staff
- a long period of building on the school site
- a change of status to extended school and Children's Centre in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that it is satisfactory and provides sound value for money. The new headteacher benefits from the active support of staff, governors and parents and, as a result, the school is moving forward once more after a difficult and disrupted period. One parent's written comments represent the views of many: 'All my children love going to school and have always had a happy time.'

The school has maintained some of the strengths identified in the last inspection report and is beginning to advance in areas where there have been signs of decline. Pupils' good personal development continues to be a strength of the school because of strong elements in the satisfactory curriculum and the school's good, caring ethos. The welcoming and positive atmosphere in the school contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good attitudes to learning. Throughout the school, pupils relate very well to each other and to adults and pupils' behaviour is very good. They show a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of keeping safe.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Attainment on entry is broadly at the expected level. They get a sound start in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and most reach expected standards by the time they start Year 1. Progress through Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but uneven. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is also satisfactory but uneven. This leads to a heavy burden being placed on teaching in Year 6, which is good and challenging. Currently, Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science and are on course to meet challenging targets. This is a big improvement on the poor results in the 2005 national tests for 11-year-olds. It is also better than the improved picture in the 2006 national tests. The new headteacher has made it clear that low standards are not acceptable and has successfully set about improving matters. Nevertheless, the school rightly recognises that satisfactory progress from Years 3 to 6 is not good enough.

Although lessons are mostly satisfactory and better, there is variability in the level of challenge for pupils. In practice, this means that work is well matched to the needs of average pupils, but too often more able pupils are not stretched and the less able find the work too difficult. Effective assessment and tracking systems are now in place, but not all teachers are using the information well enough to guarantee all pupils are suitably challenged. The most effective practice is in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's good leadership has halted the decline in pupils' progress. There is an adequate knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, improvement planning identifies the most important priorities but the school's self evaluation lacks precision in some important areas. This is because not enough of the planned outcomes are measurable. Given these recent developments the school is soundly placed for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress from Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing.

- Raise the overall quality of teaching to that of the best.
- Increase the pace of school improvement by making planning and self evaluation more precise.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress and by the time they enter Year 1 they have reached the nationally expected goals. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards are average by the end of Year 2. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory but it fluctuates between year groups according to the quality of teaching. Pupils make the most progress in Year 6 and standards are broadly average. Results in national tests have declined; they were particularly low for Year 6 pupils in 2005 and the progress of that group was poor. The school reacted positively to this with much training and development in English and mathematics. At the core of this work is the extensive tracking of pupils' achievements and the use of this information to set and achieve challenging targets. Results rose markedly in 2006, particularly in writing. Nevertheless, achievement in writing could be higher. The main reasons for this are:

- weaknesses in setting challenging targets for individuals and marking work in line with these targets
- the insufficient use and development of children's literacy skills in other subjects.

The school is dealing with these shortcomings in partnership with the local authority. There are no significant differences in the standards of boys and girls. Pupils with extra learning needs, those learning English as an additional language and pupils in the care of the local authority benefit from good support and progress well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity is strong because of involvement with children and adults from other cultures, such as Chinese artists. Moral and social development is particularly effective and promote very good behaviour, good attitudes and respect for each other and staff. Pupils develop good teamwork skills in activities such as talking partners. These values and the satisfactory academic progress combine to ensure satisfactory preparation for future education. Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and know who to turn to for help. Attendance is good and improving. Vulnerable pupils grow in confidence because of the good care and support they receive. They understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and this has been enhanced by good links with the local sports college and the use of the recently built sports centre. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider communities, through the lively 'buddy' system, charitable donations and regular performances. The school

improvement plan identifies the setting up of a school council as a priority for this year.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is variable with some good practice. None of the lessons observed during the inspection was less than satisfactory and there were good lessons. Improvements in national test results and evidence from pupils' books reflect the best teaching, found in Year 6. Typically, teaching strengths include:

- effective class management that promotes pupils' good attitudes to learning
- good subject knowledge that makes learning enjoyable
- good use of whole school initiatives such as talking partners
- effective support for pupils with extra learning needs.

Inconsistency in teaching and learning is caused by the patchy use of the new assessment information to match work accurately to pupils' individual needs. Furthermore, in a few classes there is not enough information in the marking about what pupils could do to improve further.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' good personal development. Enrichment of the curriculum is good, for instance:

- the effective links with external providers, such as the work with local secondary schools to develop skills in physical education and control technology
- the good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs which fosters pupils' enjoyment, promotes endeavour and develops pupils' skills in areas such as sport, music and art
- the pupils' involvement in community activities, such as designing inserts for a fence around a local green area.

In Years 1 to 6, a start has been made to link learning across subjects so that pupils use and develop basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. Evidence in pupils' books is that there is not enough of this work going on, particularly in the use and development of writing skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

There are good systems for safeguarding pupils, child protection and health and safety. Pupils receive lots of praise and support for their emotional development, often in 'circle time' (class discussions). Good supervision ensures that pupils are safe when

moving around school and at break times. The school quickly and effectively deals with the very few occurrences of inappropriate behaviour and both pupils and parents appreciate this. However support and guidance are satisfactory. This is because not all teachers are using information about pupils well enough to ensure all pupils are suitably challenged. Nonetheless, the systems for tracking pupils' achievements are improving. Younger pupils are given good guidance and support and know what they need to do to move onto the next step in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school is generous to judge its leadership and management as good. Nevertheless, this is understandable because the school is emerging stronger from a disrupted period when pupils' achievement and progress suffered. Leaders have tackled these issues well so that standards and progress are improving once more. The new headteacher has effectively established good practices, particularly in the tracking of pupils' achievements. The school recognises that it has much work to do. The long-term improvement planning shows the ambition of the leaders and managers but some aspects of their self evaluation lack precision. For example:

- the regular monitoring of teaching focuses too closely on the way that the teacher presents the lesson and insufficiently on pupils' achievement and progress
- not all plans have effective criteria for measuring the success of actions and initiatives.

Governors and senior staff are well informed and provide satisfactory support. Financial management is prudent and the school has sound measures for ensuring value for money in its buying of supplies and services.

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## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Barnwell Primary School

Whitefield Estate

Penshaw

Houghton le Spring

Tyne and Wear

DH4 7RT

5 December 2006

Dear Children

We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and being in your school. We are very grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. Please give a special thanks to those who talked with us.

What we really liked about your school:

- the better progress that you are making in your work
- the very good behaviour and good relationships you develop with each other and the staff of the school
- your good attitudes to work and the school
- your contribution to an effective, safe and caring atmosphere in the school
- the good range of activities that enrich your curriculum
- the support the school receives from your homes
- the way that leaders and managers are improving the school.

We have asked your teachers to make better use of the information they have about you when planning your work so that you make even more progress in Years 3 to 6. You can be a great help by always doing your best work and following the advice of your teachers. We have also asked the school to be very precise in what it needs to do to make the school even better for you.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector