

Barham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101515
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	307716
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	665
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Param Sandhu
Headteacher	Ms Karen Giles
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002
School address	Danethorpe Road Wembley HA0 4RQ
Telephone number	020 8902 3706
Fax number	020 8903 5098

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2007
Inspection number	307716

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large, multilingual and multi-ethnic primary school with a nursery. More than 80% of pupils speak one of the school's 29 languages in addition to English, and almost all pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. Around one in three of pupils are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. A quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than average. More pupils join or leave the school at other than the normal time of admission than in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Barham Primary School prides itself on its ethos and achieves much in creating an equal and harmonious community in which children's behaviour is excellent and they learn to respect each other and value their own and others' efforts and contributions. This does much to support the achievement of pupils from all backgrounds, often learning English as an additional language, who together make up the school community. The good Foundation Stage means children enter the school well prepared for learning. As they move through the school, their progress is satisfactory overall, but this masks pockets of good progress in particular subject areas or year groups. By the time pupils leave the school, the majority reach nationally expected standards. However, fewer exceed these than in most schools.

This is a satisfactory school which, in its own words, is 'striving for excellence'. Since the last inspection, it has improved the standards pupils reach and the quality of teaching. These improvements are due to the efforts of its hard working staff and good leadership. This illustrates its good capacity to improve further. Staff have identified that a key factor in recent improvements is the effective tracking of pupils' progress. This has highlighted exactly where they need to focus their efforts and contributes to the challenging targets the school sets. The effectiveness of this work can be seen in the recently improved standards in mathematics and science and the increasing proportions of pupils who achieve well in these subjects. This also results from the better opportunities they now have for investigating and problem solving. Not all the school's goals have yet been achieved. Whilst the curriculum helps pupils to develop their basic English skills well, it lacks a sharp enough focus on ensuring that they also develop the more advanced English skills they need to do well academically. This is particularly noticeable in their writing. The school plans to address this through extending the opportunities pupils have to develop these academic English skills across different subjects. The school also plans to continue with its work on improving the quality of learning and teaching in lessons. Some changes they have made have worked very well. Successful examples include involving pupils in assessing their own work and providing good opportunities for children to share their ideas. However, the activities teachers set for pupils of different abilities in lessons do not always support and challenge them to make good progress. Pupils continue to be well cared for individually and as a school community. As a result, they thrive emotionally to become mature and confident young people.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and thinking skills. They settle quickly into the daily routine of life at school and make satisfactory progress. When they reach the Reception classes, the highly practical curriculum, based on many activities initiated by the children themselves, links learning and promotes their language development. This is particularly important for the large number of children who are learning English as an additional language. The children become independent and start to take responsibility for their learning. This is encouraged well in Reception through the way that learning is organised. Children quickly adapt to moving from room to room to experience different activities and to learn new things. The team approach to teaching in Reception leads to highly motivated children who enjoy learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress to improve standards, particularly in writing.
- Adapt the curriculum so that pupils develop the more advanced English language skills needed to support later learning.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching by ensuring activities in lessons challenge all pupils to make good progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils reach standards which are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but which represent satisfactory progress from their starting points. A marked improvement in the way that teachers use tracking information to identify and support pupils, has led to better standards and progress in mathematics and science in the 2007 national tests, at the end of Year 6. As a result, a larger proportion of pupils reached higher levels in these subjects. However, English is a weaker area. Too few pupils reached or exceeded national expectations in the subject and writing was particularly weak. The school has plans in place to develop this aspect of pupils' learning through changes to the curriculum.

The school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils carefully to ensure that no group is disadvantaged and takes effective action to prevent this happening.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school a good deal which shows in their good attendance and excellent behaviour in and around the school. Pupils are proud of the certificates they gain for good attendance and know it helps them do well. The 'red hats' team of peer mentors and the school council are central to building pupils' confidence and getting them involved in helping to improve the school. Pupils make important decisions about the school community, for example launching a tuck shop to raise funds. Such experiences, along with good opportunities in lessons to work in pairs and teams, helps develop pupils' work-place skills. Pupils contribute well to the wider community. A highlight for some pupils this term is their involvement in an exhibition at a local museum whilst others enjoy singing at local residential homes for the elderly and supporting charities.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to keeping healthy. They fully understand healthy eating and participate enthusiastically in the physical education lessons, 'fitness breaks' and sports clubs which help to keep them fit. The school's successful programme for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means pupils develop confidence, self esteem and show respect for others in the school community. For example, even young pupils respect each others' differences and are aware of the dangers of racism. They are proud of their many cultures and languages but the school provides limited opportunities for them to develop these language skills further.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are generally lively and well planned. Pupils behave very well and are enthusiastic learners. The adults explain tasks well and their questions stimulate and motivate pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils respond confidently and are given good opportunities to talk and work with a partner or in small groups. The good quality of relationships that exist means that pupils can learn in a calm atmosphere. In the best lessons, pupils of differing abilities make good progress because their tasks are timely and challenging. This is not yet consistent across the school. In some lessons, the introductory work goes on for too long so that pupils have little time for the written or practical tasks. In others, these written or practical tasks do not fully match what groups of pupils need to learn next. This slows pupils' progress although good behaviour is always maintained. Teaching assistants support pupils well, particularly when working with small groups of learners on extra activities. Teachers' marking is regular and helpful. Pupils are actively involved in judging how well they have done and the progress they have made.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school evaluates and improves its curriculum to make sure it matches pupils' needs. One successful example is the greater emphasis on investigating and problem-solving in mathematics and science. This has been welcomed by pupils. As one explained 'teachers make learning fun because we do lots of experiments and games to help us learn'. However, the curriculum is not yet fully adapted to cater for the needs of pupils as they become more fluent in English as an additional language, particularly in writing. Teachers are beginning to make links between pupils' learning in different subjects although pupils could make more use of information and communication technology (ICT) across all subjects. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching for physical education as well as enjoyable regular exercise sessions in class. This supports their very good understanding of fitness and health. Another strength of the curriculum is the careful way pupils are helped to understand cultural and linguistic diversity and value difference.

The school successfully offers a good range of extra activities, clubs, and trips. For example, the number of pupils joining in lunchtime clubs has doubled in recent years. These extra activities make a good contribution to the pupils' enjoyment and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The commitment of staff to pupils' care, guidance and support has a good impact on pupils' personal and academic development. One successful example is the very thorough system the school has for monitoring the well-being and progress of pupils. This involves class teachers, specialists and other adults working well together as a team. In turn, the school works well with parents and outside specialists to overcome particular difficulties such as poor attendance or individual needs. As a result, attendance is good and children who are experiencing personal or academic difficulties are well cared for and supported. The school also has a good system for sharing with parents what it hopes their children will learn and achieve and how they can help. This is followed through in classrooms, where pupils are regularly involved in assessing

what they have learned and identifying what they need to do next. While a majority of parents and carers feel well informed about the school's work, this is not universally the case. As a result, a small minority of parents feel their views are not always taken into account.

There are effective procedures in place to keep pupils safe and pupils are confident to approach adults in the school to help solve problems.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led by the headteacher, supported by senior leaders, all of whom have clear responsibilities which are carried out well. For example, leaders of subject areas monitor planning and teaching, investigate pupils' progress as well as talking to children to discover which aspects of their subjects are working well and identifying which areas need improvement. The process of 'striving for excellence' is supported well by the approach the school takes to self-evaluation. All staff are involved in summarising areas they are proud of and identifying areas which could be improved. This helps to form the next year's plan. The impact of this can be seen in the common sense of purpose and the commitment of staff to the improvements which they help to make. Governors support this process well, although they should do more to hold the school to account by checking the impact of the steps taken on the pupils themselves.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	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

9 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barham Primary School, Wembley, HA0 4RQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. All the inspectors were very pleased to meet you and enjoyed sharing some time with you and your teachers. You told us that you all get along well together and we could see that you behaved very well in lessons and around the school. We could also see that you come to school very regularly and know how important this is. So well done!

We have judged that your school is satisfactory overall. Like your teachers, we think that you could sometimes make better progress, particularly in your writing. Most of you don't have that much experience of using English when you join the school because you usually speak one of your other languages. You do well learning to speak English but not quite so well in understanding all the different ways English is used in your studies. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to learn about this. We have also asked your teachers to think about whether the activities they set for you in lessons are going to help you to make really good progress. Sometimes they do, but not yet all the time.

One of the things the school does well is to share ideas about how to make improvements. These ideas have helped you do better in your studies. One way has been by involving you in solving problems and carrying out investigations. You told us this makes your learning fun. We can see that it is also helping you learn more quickly. Teachers also give you lots of opportunities to think about how well you are doing and targets to help you improve.

We found that you grow into mature young people because the school takes very good care of you. Your headteacher, the teachers and all the adults at your school work well together as a team. They are all very proud of the 'ethos' of the school. This means how happy you all are and how you all get along so well. It also means how you all share ideas, like the 'common values' children in Year 3 were thinking about when we were there. We were pleased to see this and wish your whole school community success.

Best wishes

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector