

# Barrow Hedges Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102959
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308173
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Frater 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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Alison Myerscough
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Matt (Acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Harbury Road Carshalton SM5 4LA
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8643 4428
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8643 2269

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds, although there are a few pupils from a range of other ethnic backgrounds, none of whom are at an early stage of learning English. A low proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly behaviour, speech and language or moderate learning difficulties. Most pupils start school in the nursery and remain for the whole of their primary education. Their attainment on entry is above average. During the inspection, an acting headteacher was covering for a year's secondment of the substantive headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Barrow Hedges Primary is a good school that enables pupils to reach well above average standards. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Behaviour is excellent and attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy the extensive range of high quality enrichment and extra-curricular activities on offer. A special feature of the school is its provision in music. All pupils in Year 4 learn to play the cello or violin, and a large number of pupils across the school have peripatetic music lessons and sing in the choirs. Through concerts for local elderly residents, visits to a special school, a range of charity work and being 'buddies' to younger peers, the pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. They develop good social, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills that promote their future education.

A high priority is given to pupils' care and pastoral support. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) helps pupils to stay safe and keep physically, socially and emotionally healthy. The school works well with a range of partners to promote pupils' well-being and achievement, including provision for an out of hours club and links with local secondary schools. Although pupils have targets to improve their writing, teachers have identified the need to develop further the guidance pupils are given to improve their work in other areas.

Improvements in the curriculum are evident in the high quality displays and links with educational visits and visitors to the school. Most pupils make good progress across the school, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where teachers make effective use of support staff to meet pupils' needs. Progress in Key Stage 2 varies because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. In lessons where teachers are skilful in matching work to the full range of ability, including the most and least able, all pupils make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress more slowly across the school because they find the work too difficult in many lessons. They are supported well in small group work outside the classroom.

The senior leadership team is improving the quality of teaching and this is resulting in a higher proportion of good and outstanding lessons, though not yet good overall. In outstanding lessons, teachers assess prior knowledge, set work at the right levels of challenge for all, and lead pupils briskly through a sequence of interesting, practical tasks linked to the learning intentions. Good use of questioning extends pupils' thinking and success criteria help them to know how to improve.

The acting headteacher has successfully built upon the previous good provision in the school and is improving systems for tracking pupils' progress and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The impact of this work is beginning to be seen in improved pupils' achievement, although inconsistencies remain. Leadership and management, therefore, provide the school with a good capacity to improve. Governors are very supportive, but are not challenging the school to reach its potential of being outstanding.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When children join the school in the Nursery or Reception classes, their skills and knowledge are above those expected for their ages. They make good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, all achieve the expected learning goals and most exceed them. The curriculum provides

a good balance between activities structured and directed by the teacher and those where children can make their own choices. They settle well into routines and quickly develop independence. For example, they are all aware of their responsibilities in tidying and clearing away resources they have been using. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractive, well resourced and provide meaningful and stimulating activities. There are purposeful opportunities for children to use their early writing skills, for example, in writing notices to let people know that the 'hotel' is closed 'due to urgent repairs' and signs to redirect guests to the campsite. Their writing skills, however, remain a relatively weaker area by the time they go into Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure all pupils make consistently good progress in writing and throughout Key Stage 2.
- Use targets and regular assessment to more closely tailor lessons to the full range of learners' needs.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

From a starting point above expectation, pupils make good progress across Key Stage 1. As a result, standards have been consistently well above average for the past five years in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing, particularly for boys, tend to be lower than in reading or mathematics, and the school has identified this as a priority for improvement. In Key Stage 2, progress has fluctuated between satisfactory and good, resulting in standards alternating between being well above average and exceptionally high for the past five years. In the 2007 national tests, standards were well above average in English and science, and exceptionally high in mathematics. As pupils entered and left Key Stage 2 with well above average standards overall, progress was satisfactory, although good in mathematics. It was broadly satisfactory for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and lower attaining boys. Fewer pupils attained higher levels in English than in mathematics and science. Across the key stage, progress remains variable. The impact of evaluation of pupils' progress is beginning to be seen, for example at the end of Key Stage 2, but is not yet ensuring standards are consistently high in all classes and subjects.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and this leads to outstanding personal development and well-being. The school is aware of the need to develop further pupils' multi-cultural understanding. The school's vibrant learning ethos nurtures pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils report very little bullying and they feel safe in the knowledge that incidents would be dealt with promptly. They work together sensibly on shared tasks and contribute positively to the community, for instance through fund raising. The school council takes its responsibilities seriously and has initiated positive changes such as additions to the 'trim trail' and selection of playground equipment. Many pupils participate in the opportunities for sport. Links to healthy lifestyles are understood and promoted further by a 'fruit only' policy at snack time, 'walk on Wednesday' and cycling with parental supervision. Pupils clearly enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance and positive attitudes to learning. One pupil spoke for many when he said, 'teachers are really nice because they make our lessons fun'.

Pupils' willingness to learn, their mature personal skills and understanding of well-being, provide excellent foundations for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

An improved system for monitoring lessons, together with effective professional development for example in speaking and listening, is raising the quality of teaching and learning, although it is not yet good overall. Effective teaching leads to consistently good progress in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 in Key Stage 2. Pupils are set by ability in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 and work is matched to their differing needs with some that is of a high level. As a result, all pupils make good progress and standards are exceptionally high. A revised system for tracking progress enables teachers to know the levels, and sub-levels, at which pupils are working, although not all teachers are using this to set tasks at different sub-levels to support and challenge all pupils to make good progress. Currently, every pupil is expected to make two sub levels of progress during a year, but this does not challenge the many pupils who are capable of a faster rate of progress. The quality of teaching and learning remains most variable across Key Stage 2 where it ranges from satisfactory to outstanding.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of enrichment activities that add interest and excitement to pupils' learning, particularly in music, drama, residential visits in Years 4 and 6, and an annual creativity week. The popular and extensive after school and lunchtime clubs help pupils to develop and refine new skills. ICT provision has improved and is used effectively across the curriculum. There are increasing links across all subjects and better progression in skills, and the school has identified the need to develop this further. Although the curriculum successfully meets the interests of learners, it does not always meet the needs of the least and most able, as in developing writing skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care of pupils is excellent. Procedures for safeguarding and protecting pupils' health and safety are robust. Pupils confidently seek help from staff when they need it, and the 'worry box' system contributes effectively to this. As one pupil stated, 'If you put a worry in the box a teacher will sort it out with you'. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Appropriate additional support is provided outside the classroom for pupils with English as an additional language or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although this is not always sustained in lessons. Academic guidance is at an early stage of development: pupils know their learning targets for writing and many are able to refer back to the success criteria of a lesson when assessing their work. Marking usually offers due praise but, as the school has identified, limited guidance on how to improve the work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The acting headteacher, supported ably by the senior leadership team, provides clear vision and direction for improvement, for example in the use of data and ICT. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly in academic standards and personal development. Self-evaluation involves all staff and governors, and accurately identifies key priorities for school improvement planning, such as the accountability of subject leaders. Subject leaders are monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work effectively, but they are not yet involved in monitoring lessons. Although the quality of teaching and learning has improved, inconsistencies remain, particularly in Key Stage 2, and this results in variable achievement. The revised progress tracking system is enabling senior leaders to identify underachievement and implement appropriate intervention programmes. It is not yet used consistently by all teachers to match lessons to the range of pupils' needs to secure high standards in all subjects. Governors discharge their responsibilities well, but do not challenge the school to ensure that, through its use of targets, the least and most able pupils achieve consistently as well as they can.

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## Annex A

## 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?	2
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?	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	3

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

07 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barrow Hedges Primary School, Carshalton, SM5 4LA

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and at playtime. We agree that your school is good and helps you to reach levels above those reached by most children at your age, but we feel some of you could make even better progress.

We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour, your above average attendance, and by how well you work in lessons. You told us how you keep safe and healthy, although some of you had chocolate bars in your lunch boxes! You enjoy school and develop good skills socially, in numeracy and ICT to help you in your future education. You are good at helping younger children, raising money for charities, and giving concerts to local elderly people.

Your headteacher, teachers and other staff work hard to care for you and make your learning interesting. We could see that you make good progress in many lessons, but in some lessons you do not learn as well because the work is too hard or too easy. You told us how much you enjoy all the outstanding clubs and extra activities such as drama. Music is a special feature of your school and many of you play musical instruments and sing in the choirs. You like your teachers and know they will take good care of you and support you if you need extra help. You know your targets for writing, but we have asked the teachers to write in your books how you can improve your work in other subjects.

Your headteacher and her team have made improvements to your school. To improve it further, we have asked them to:

- help everyone of you to make good progress in writing and when in Years 3 to 6
- make sure all lessons are not too easy or too hard and help you all to make good progress.

You can help by checking your own progress towards your targets.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector