

Barlborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112505
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310906
Inspection dates	27–28 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Raymond Jardine

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Gale
Headteacher	Mrs Lorriane Jones
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2003
School address	High Street Barlborough Chesterfield Derbyshire S43 4ET
Telephone number	01246 810381
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English. There are more boys than girls in most years. Most pupils come from Barlborough village and its immediate surroundings. Their social and economic circumstances are average to above, and this is reflected in their entitlement to free school meals. A broadly average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has twice gained a Basic Skills Award. The new headteacher took up her post in April 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Barlborough Primary provides a satisfactory and improving education for its pupils and sound value for money. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are strengths in the quality of care that pupils receive and in their personal skills and relationships. The great majority of parents are very appreciative of the school's influence on their children's education. The new headteacher has the confidence and respect of parents, staff and governors. Her good leadership gives the school clear educational direction. It unites the staff, and is raising their expectations of how pupils' academic standards can be improved. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's accurate analysis of what needs to be done provides a secure foundation for the school's development. Recent changes are designed to involve staff more fully and effectively in monitoring and improving the school's work and in making better use of assessment. It is too early to see their full impact on the quality of provision and pupils' achievements. Improvements since the last inspection and the recent increased pace of change show the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Children in Reception make good progress and most attain the standards expected and some exceed them by the time they leave it. In later years, most pupils make satisfactory progress to achieve standards broadly in line with the national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A key priority is to raise standards further. Weaknesses in some of pupils' basic skills, such as punctuation, spelling and grammar and mathematical mental-calculations, limit their progress and standards. Steps are currently being taken to overcome these weaknesses.

Relationships are very good and reflect pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy school and all that it offers through interesting lessons, a good curriculum and well-attended clubs. They behave well and readily take responsibility. For example, some help younger pupils to improve their reading. Pupils are consulted and influence school life through their lively school council. They learn to live safe and healthy lives from the good personal, social and health education and additional guidance that they receive. The staff know each individual well, and ensure all receive a good quality of care and support. Pupils who find learning difficult, such as those with social and behavioural difficulties, are supported well, for example, through a learning mentor and good levels of classroom support.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Most lessons involve pupils in discussions and a variety of tasks that engage them, although in some, the more able are not challenged enough. Nevertheless, there is enough good practice on which to build for the school to reach its goal of ensuring good quality and consistency in teaching and learning. All pupils have targets to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics, but they are not using them effectively to review and improve their work so that they make better progress.

The cramped school grounds and classrooms are a key concern of many parents. Governors are much involved in both shaping the school's direction and challenging its effectiveness. They have acted on parents' concerns and plans are well advanced for an extension to the school's buildings.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage leadership and classroom support are based on a very good understanding of children's learning needs and provision is led and managed well. Staff make a strong

contribution to children's personal development by encouraging them to be independent and to take responsibility. Children's attainment on entry to Reception varies year-on-year. Typically, their knowledge and skills are a little below those expected of children of their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in all areas of learning. Most achieve the standards expected by the end of Reception, and some exceed them. Routines are very well established so that children feel secure. The children learn in an attractive and purposeful environment full of displays that support their learning. The curriculum is rich and varied and the quality of teaching is consistently good. Consequently all enjoy learning. 'We counted fourteen,' two children said excitedly as they tallied whether their classmates preferred fairies to dragons during a lively numeracy session.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement, particularly in pupils' accuracy in use of basic skills in writing and mental mathematics.
- Build on the effective practice that already exists to make teaching consistently good or better across the school and ensure that more able pupils are challenged well enough.
- Use individual targets and next steps in learning more effectively to enable pupils to routinely review and improve their own work.

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' achievements are satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress from the end of Reception to maintain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. The school has focused attention on improving reading with some success. Progress is better in both reading and mathematics than in writing. Writing is a current school priority for improvement.

In Years 3 to 6, progress has improved in the last two years and was in line with the average when compared with other schools last year. Year 6 standards have varied, partly reflecting year-on-year differences in pupils' abilities on entry to the school. In 2007, standards were average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress is currently satisfactory but some pupils are not accurate enough in their basic skills in writing and mental calculations. While the school exceeded its 2007 Year 6 targets for English and mathematics, they were not demanding enough; those set for 2008 are higher. Although most pupils achieve satisfactorily, those who find learning difficult progress well because of the good levels of additional support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and enables them to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. The school successfully fosters strong and caring relationships among its pupils. They have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. Pupils behave well. They say that bullying is rare and that they have confidence in their teachers to deal with it. Attendance is good, and the school has effective procedures to encourage regular attendance. Pupils respect and care for each other. They readily take on a

range of responsibilities around the school, for example, some older pupils act as 'playground pals' and actively give support to their peers. Pupils are polite and considerate and cooperate well with each other in lessons, although they are not involved enough in improving their work independently. Most pupils understand and adopt habits that contribute to a safe and healthy lifestyle, as reflected in their snacks and lunches. They enjoy regular opportunities to contribute to the school community and beyond, and are very successful in supporting a number of charities and good causes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most lessons are planned well with clear objectives that are shared with pupils. Little time is lost in gaining pupils' attention because most lessons are interesting. Relationships are very good. Consequently, pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They work productively on shared tasks and 'talking partners' enable them to discuss and refine their thinking and make considered responses. In the better lessons, group and individual work is adapted well to the range of pupils' abilities, but this is not consistent across the school. Sometimes more able pupils are not challenged enough in their learning. Teaching assistants are effective and enable those who find learning difficult to learn and progress well. Although pupils have targets for reading, writing and mathematics, these do not direct their efforts well enough. Teachers review each individual's progress towards their targets, but pupils do not know them sufficiently well to be able to work independently on improving their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

skills, knowledge and understanding. Children receive a good start in their Reception year. Recent improvements to curricular planning and co-ordination through topic work are giving pupils a well-balanced range of learning opportunities across subjects, which was a weakness at the last inspection. The extensive use of theme days, visitors and visits adds to the enjoyment of learning. The good programme for personal, social and health education is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development and their understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. The sound provision for developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepares them adequately for their next schools. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to participate in a good range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils receive good pastoral support from caring staff. There are effective arrangements for promoting good behaviour, self-esteem and respect for others. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, safety and security are good. Provision for those pupils who find learning difficult is also good. They are supported by effective partnerships with specialists to assess and meet their needs. Consequently, these pupils progress well in their learning. Revised and more robust systems for monitoring the progress pupils make in English and mathematics are enabling the school to identify and support those who are underachieving more promptly. These systems are not yet fully embedded and require extending further to include science and

ICT. Marking and feedback are very regular and the best, in literacy, is very good. Marking varies considerably in the quality of guidance that pupils receive to help them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher works well with her deputy to give the school good leadership and direction, focused on raising standards. Staff morale is high and teamwork is improving. The headteacher has consulted widely with parents, pupils, staff and governors. Evaluation of the school's current standards and teaching quality is accurate and provides a very sound foundation for the new priorities in a well directed improvement plan. The effectiveness of curricular leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Key changes are underway to improve the effectiveness of middle management by distributing responsibilities more fully and equitably. As a result, curricular leaders are becoming more effective. Another significant development is the central collection and more rigorous analysis of assessment information on pupils. Curricular leaders have not been analysing such information consistently enough to enable all of them to focus sharply on improvements where they are most needed. These skills are more advanced in the management of literacy and numeracy than, for example, in science and ICT. These initiatives have good potential but are not yet fully embedded in the school's work. While the school is ambitious and determined to improve, targets are not used effectively enough with individual pupils to raise achievement and have only recently become more challenging at whole school level. The governing body is led well. Governors provide good support and challenge to the school and are much involved in shaping its development.

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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?	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?	3
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	2

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	2
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	2
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?	2
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?	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 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	3
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

29 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barlborough Primary School, Barlborough, S43 4ET

Thank you for the warm welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. We spoke to many of you and what you told us helped to confirm what parents, staff and governors had to say about the quality of education that you receive. I am writing now to tell you about what we found out.

We agree with your headteacher, the governors and the staff that you receive a satisfactory education and that you grow and mature well into responsible young people. You clearly enjoy coming to school and learning, and you get on very well with other pupils and adults. Your attendance and behaviour are good. Please keep up the good work! We were impressed with the care and concern that you show for each other and for those less fortunate, for example, through the considerable funds that you raise for charities. You are learning to live safe and healthy lives from the guidance that you are given. Interesting activities, visits and visitors help to make your learning enjoyable. You get off to a good start in Reception and gain knowledge and skills at a satisfactory rate as you move through the school. The staff and governors look after you well and help you to grow in confidence so that you can enjoy learning more for yourselves.

Your teachers and their assistants are working hard to help you to meet your targets. We think they should make sure you use your targets to review your own work as you complete it, and think about how you can make it even better. We also think that the staff should help you to improve your skills in spelling and punctuating accurately and to use mental mathematics more confidently.

Your headteacher has been looking very carefully with the staff and governors at what they need to do next to make the school even better. We agree with them that staff should help each other to make all your lessons as good as the best that we saw so that all of you, including those who learn quickest, are well challenged to make good progress.

With all good wishes for your future at Barlborough Primary,

Raymond Jardine

Lead inspector