

# Barlow CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112798
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311010
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rajinder Harrison

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J M Ferreday
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs V K McKie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Millcross Lane Barlow Dronfield Derbyshire S18 7TA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2890413
<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2890413

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	311010

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is small primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British background. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark for physical education and the Basic Skills Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. Their above average attendance reflects their keenness to be at school. The very caring and supportive environment helps pupils form excellent relationships and they feel cared for and valued. They develop a very mature and sensitive awareness of the needs of others. Pupils understand well the importance of staying safe, fit and healthy and participate enthusiastically in the many clubs and events the school organises. Pupils particularly appreciate the efforts staff make to ensure learning is interesting and fun. Parents are very positive about the school and say it is a happy, welcoming place where their children thrive.

Children start in the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are generally at the levels expected for their age although sometimes, their personal development and their literacy skills are less secure. These shortcomings are addressed well through the good activities that teachers plan to help children make a good start to their education. Children achieve well and attain average standards by the end of reception, although their writing skills remain less secure. The headteacher and staff work hard together to monitor the school's work and improve the quality of education pupils receive. The impact is seen, for example, in good quality teaching, which ensures that pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 6, they attain overall standards that are above average. Current Year 6 pupils are working at well above average standards in science. Standards in English are not as high; pupils have lower starting points in writing and too few opportunities to write independently and at length to address this adequately. Teachers plan lessons well so that they meet the learning needs of most pupils. Occasionally, the more able are not challenged sufficiently to achieve more. Pupils who find learning difficult achieve well because they receive good individual support. The curriculum is good with excellent additional activities that enrich learning. Care arrangements and academic guidance are good; as a result, pupils who need extra help are identified early and they learn in a secure and supportive environment. Teachers set targets to help pupils improve their work and offer good guidance through marking, particularly in literacy. In other subjects the practice is more variable and pupils are not involved enough in evaluating their work and thus determining their own targets.

Good leadership and management ensure pupils' good achievement. The headteacher involves all staff and governors in evaluating the school's performance and identifying the right improvement priorities, for example, currently in writing. Pupils' progress is analysed closely so that challenging targets can be set. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school is accurate in its self-evaluation and leaders are well capable of making further improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children progress well because teaching is good and the curriculum takes account of their differing needs. For example, if children have considerable gaps in their emotional development and their literacy skills, these areas are given greater emphasis. A good balance of adult-guided activities and those that children choose for themselves help them gain confidence and independence. They enjoy exploring the fun activities staff plan for them, and learn effectively. The school's new word building programme has already started to impact on children's spelling and reading skills. The staff work effectively as a team. They check that children try everything

and intervene sensitively to guide their learning. Children who need specific help, particularly those who find it hard to sustain concentration, receive good individual support. Children particularly enjoy playing outside but, due to site limitations, the space is not readily accessible to allow children to explore independently.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to write independently in order to raise standards further in English.
- Ensure that the more able pupils are challenged fully in all lessons.
- Provide pupils with effective guidance as to how to improve their work in all subjects and involve them more in assessing their work and setting their targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and make good progress. School records and pupils' work indicate that standards are rising and that pupils are well on track to achieve the challenging targets that they are set. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain slightly above average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards are a little below average in writing because the word building strategies brought in this year to raise standards in literacy, have not been in place long enough to have had maximum impact. Pupils in the current Year 1 are working at expected levels. In the current Year 6, standards are well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English. The impact of the school's new approaches to develop writing such as 'big writing' is starting to take effect but this is not yet reflected in the results of tests this year. Achievement in reading is good throughout the school and home reading is well organised. Pupils who need additional help with their learning achieve well through the good support they receive.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils express their ideas very confidently. They are polite and friendly and the behaviour of most is exemplary. They listen attentively and are keen to learn. The school's many international links and contacts with more culturally diverse schools, help pupils learn to respect the cultures and traditions of others. Many visitors and visits help them gain a good understanding of the wider world. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically. For example, school councillors decide on fund-raising events, purchase new playground equipment and mini play-leaders entertain younger pupils at playtime. Through organising coffee afternoons and establishing recycling projects, they develop an excellent understanding of citizenship. Pupils are very aware of safety issues and the dangers of drugs and know who to go to if they are worried. Pupils say 'it's like a big family here and we look after each other'. Pupils know what constitutes healthy eating and talk enthusiastically about growing and eating the food they cultivate at school. Numerous sports activities, including the daily 'dance' sessions led by pupils, ensure they exercise regularly.

Through working cooperatively, they demonstrate excellent workplace skills. Their good achievement and excellent personal skills ensures they are very effectively prepared for the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils. They plan interesting activities that capture pupils' interest and imagination. Classrooms are stimulating and inspire pupils to learn. Expectations of pupils are generally high and teachers plan lessons carefully to meet the full range of learning needs. Occasionally, all pupils carry out the same tasks and the more able pupils are not challenged enough. The best lessons run at a lively pace and are organised well so that all pupils can contribute. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) with confidence to develop pupils' skills and to make presentations more stimulating. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their ideas and learn from each other and thus develop confidence in their learning. Activities that involve drama or practical tasks hold pupils' interest more effectively. Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils facing various kinds of challenge. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers sometimes talk for too long, direct pupils too much or fail to make the purpose of the lesson clear.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is structured and planned well and builds successfully on previous work. Effective activities are organised to help pupils with specific needs. The school is developing a topic-based approach that links knowledge and skills across subjects, as pupils find this helps them make better sense of their learning. Provision for literacy has improved and the impact is reflected in the improved standards in reading. While new approaches to teach word building skills and 'big writing' are starting to take effect, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write independently. Provision for ICT is good and teachers plan for its use well. Pupils have many good opportunities to extend their learning through themed events such as cultural weeks. A good programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development. Many visits, visitors and other activities, including numerous very popular after school clubs, add excitement to pupils' learning.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care arrangements are good. Pupils feel they are listened to and that staff will help if they are worried or upset. Staff know the pupils well and take prompt action should any problem arise. Child protection, health and safety and safeguarding procedures are all secure. Pupils who have specific social or educational needs are supported very sensitively and external agencies are consulted when necessary. Good links with secondary schools ensure Year 6 pupils feel confident to move on.

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and those who need specific help are identified and provided for well. Pupils know and understand their targets but are not involved enough in assessing their work in order to identify for themselves how well they are doing or what to do to improve further. Marking is good in writing in providing clear guidance and appropriate challenge to pupils. The guidance in other subjects is often too general to show pupils what they need to do to achieve more.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher inspires the overall success of the school. There is a strong sense of the school being one big family where the contribution of every individual is valued. Teachers recognise that the newly introduced skills based curriculum needs further development and that raising standards in literacy, particularly writing is a priority. All teachers are involved in leading school development and they carry out their roles successfully. Sometimes checks to ensure that initiatives are implemented fully are not sufficiently demanding. This results in inconsistencies in, for example, the quality of teachers' marking and the expectations of the more able pupils. Governors support the school well. Through regular visits, they are increasingly involved in monitoring the school's performance and asking probing questions regarding developments. Partnerships with other schools help maximise the school's limited resources. Communication with parents is very good and the school, quite rightly, is highly regarded by most parents.

**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](http://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?	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?	1
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	2

### 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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?	2
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	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	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

27 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barlow C of E Primary School, Barlow, S18 7TA

I am writing to tell you what I found out when I came to your school recently to look at the work you do and to talk to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for being so friendly and polite. I enjoyed talking to you about the many clubs you can join and all that you know about healthy eating and keeping fit and safe. You very clearly understand what is right and what is wrong and show care and consideration for others. I particularly liked the way the mini leaders help to look after younger children in the playground and how brilliantly you all get on with each other. I enjoyed being with you on your sports afternoon. It was great to see all of you having so much fun and cheering your teams so sportingly. Your behaviour was excellent.

I am pleased that you enjoy school and attend so regularly. I think your school is a good school. It is run well and is giving you a good education. Everyone works hard to help you make good progress. Your lessons are good and teachers give you many opportunities to work with each other, which you do really well. Those of you who need extra help with your learning make good progress because the school helps you learn. You are really well prepared for life at your next school. I am pleased yours is such a happy and interesting school and that you and your parents are so pleased with it.

There are many things that your headteacher, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better! These are the things that need doing first.

- Give you more opportunities to write so you do even better in English.
- Make sure that those of you that could do harder work have this.
- Encourage you to check your work so that you can decide what you need to do next to improve it.

There are things you could do to help too. For example, you could ask for harder work if you need it and decide for yourselves what you think your targets should be.

I hope that you will all do well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector