

Barford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120783
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313737
Inspection dates	18–19 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathleen Yates

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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Debbie Watson
Headteacher	Mrs Heather Ware
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2003
School address	Chapel Street Barford Norwich Norfolk NR9 4AB
Telephone number	01603759660
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving the village of Barford and its surrounding villages, from which many pupils come. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Barford Primary provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Parents describe the school as having a warm and friendly family atmosphere and this is indeed the case. Pupils' views are also positive; they particularly enjoy the wide range of extra activities the school provides. The school has set challenging targets for pupils' attendance, which latest figures confirm is now satisfactory. There are good links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners.

From their broadly average starting points, children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and most reach the expected levels in all areas of learning. This satisfactory progress continues, so that by the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level and the higher level 3 in all subjects is average. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in all subjects, reflecting satisfactory achievement overall. In 2006, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in reading was above the national average. In the 2007 Key Stage 2 tests, pupils achieved well in mathematics, where they attained above average standards. Reading standards were average. However, the same cohort of pupils made inadequate progress in writing, where the results fell well below the national average at both the expected and higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Around the school and in the playground pupils behave well; in lessons, their behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and safe practices and make a positive contribution to the community. They work well together and preparation for pupils' economic well-being is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there is not enough consistently good teaching to enable pupils to make better than satisfactory progress. The curriculum is satisfactory and the range of extra activities is good. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Procedures to safeguard children are comprehensive. The goals that the school sets for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 are both challenging and realistic. The school also sets targets to help pupils make progress throughout the year, but teachers do not always use these well enough to ensure that pupils know what they should do to improve.

Improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory. There were concerns then for the provision for pupils identified as gifted and talented. The school has addressed this issue with a range of extra opportunities. A major development is the addition of a purpose built hall, which is a great benefit to the school's staff, pupils and the extended services that use it. Resources for information, communication and technology (ICT) have improved significantly and are now good. The school is very aware of the restrictions of the lack of space within the main building; half of the pupils are taught in mobile classrooms where the extremes of temperatures make teaching and learning uncomfortable.

The leadership and management of the school and its capacity for further improvement are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory rather than good as the school judges. In most respects, the school's view of itself is more generous than the inspection findings. Senior and middle leaders have been successful in raising standards in mathematics in the school and have developed good systems to track pupils' progress in the subject. However, they have not been as rigorous in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress in writing or in ensuring that, where needed, staff receive the necessary training to teach writing very well. As

a result, pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable in this area. The governing body discharges its responsibilities well and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children enter the Foundation Stage, their skills and knowledge are typical of children of this age. Good induction programmes ensure pupils feel safe and settle well. Adults forge close relationships with the children so that they enjoy a satisfactory range of learning experiences and readily contribute to discussions and group activities. Many parents respond to the invitation to be involved in their children's learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment of children's learning shows that achievement is satisfactory, so that most children gain the expected levels in all areas. By the end of the Reception year, most children are confident to work alongside others, but the routines whereby they are required to listen attentively when teachers are explaining new learning are not yet firmly established. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the facilities for children to engage in outdoor activities are inadequate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in writing by ensuring that teachers use the information about how well pupils are making progress to set targets which pupils understand so that at all times they are clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that leaders and managers are given the time and training to lead and check up on their subjects effectively.
- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good.

A small proportion of 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

Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily, so that by Year 2 they reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. Results in the Key Stage 2 tests at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in English, mathematics and science in 2006, with the percentage of pupils achieving the highest level in English being above average. Overall test results for Key Stage 2 have improved year on year for the last 3 years. Unvalidated results in 2007 continue to show broadly average attainment, with above average attainment in mathematics, where pupils achieve well. Although pupils achieved well in reading, there was a significant decline in their attainment in writing, with the test results being well below average and well below the pupils' capabilities. While the school met and exceeded targets for mathematics, it fell well short of its own realistic targets for writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their work. They behave well around the school and in the playground. They understand and adhere to school rules as set out in the

Barford Code. In those lessons in which the teaching does not fully engage pupils, or when teachers' classroom management skills are not fully developed, there are occasions when a few pupils resort to fidgeting and show little enthusiasm for learning. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe, eat healthily and know how to keep fit. They say that there is little bullying or racism and are confident that the school deals swiftly with any incidents. Attendance is average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Pupils take responsibility seriously, for example in their roles as 'buddies', and are diligent in ensuring no-one is 'left out'. The school council is keenly involved in decision-making and its views are taken seriously and acted upon. Pupils also contribute well to the community, raising large sums of money for a range of charities. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is aided by their good progress in numeracy but let down by their weaker skills in writing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some aspects that are good. Teachers and pupils enjoy good relationships, which promote a positive climate for learning. In the better lessons, stimulating tasks are set with a suitable balance of teacher and pupil input so that pupils respond readily and the pace of learning is brisk. However, some teaching is uninspiring, and in these lessons pupils show less interest, and do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Teaching assistants play a vital role in helping pupils with learning difficulties to improve their performance, especially in reading and numeracy. They question pupils well, to check their understanding and give them time to put their thoughts into words. This helps to build up their confidence.

The quality of marking is satisfactory. The presentation of work is variable; it is mostly good in mathematics, but less attention is given in English to help pupils to take pride in their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. The school is at an early stage of integrating opportunities to develop writing across the curriculum. Disappointing test results in writing have raised the school's awareness of the urgent need to ensure pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their writing skills. The school is now giving greater attention to this.

A good range of visits, visitors and community links enhance the experiences offered to pupils. Links with churches and sports clubs enrich pupils' learning and good use is made of the new school hall to promote pupils' physical development, which was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. After-school clubs promoting sporting or arts activities are well attended. The residential visits for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 provide excellent opportunities for pupils to achieve success outside the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Child protection procedures and arrangements for safeguarding pupils' safety and welfare are robust. Partnerships with parents and outside agencies are good. The school is prompt in notifying parents of any issues or concerns. There is early identification of any pupil with

learning difficulties, which ensures they receive additional support. Targets to promote pupils' progress for future learning are not shared consistently well with pupils. Consequently, they lack a clear understanding about what they should be learning next or exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Procedures to prepare pupils for secondary schools are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is a strong team spirit in the school, which has been especially important during a period of many staff changes over the last year. Leaders and managers have acted conscientiously in order to minimise the disruption to pupils' learning. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the governors have a clear vision for the future development of the school. The governing body carries out its duties rigorously, and governors are aware of the school's strengths and the main areas for development. They are all well aware of the inadequacies of the outdoor area for Foundation Stage children and are intent on seeking the best solution. Support staff are well qualified and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

During the recent past, senior leaders have successfully focused on improving the teaching of mathematics by setting challenging targets, and this is reflected in the above average attainment in this year's Key Stage 2 tests. While the school has collected information on pupils' attainment and progress, systems have not ensured that leaders and managers were able to identify the underachievement of the older pupils in writing early enough and, as a result, the school has not met its own targets in this area.

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
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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	3

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	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	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

20 September 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Barford Primary School, Barford, NR9 4AB

As you know, I came to your school recently to carry out an inspection. I really enjoyed meeting you. This letter is to thank you for helping me with my work and to let you know what I found out about your school.

You and your teachers get on well together and your parents are happy that the school takes good care of you. I am delighted to see what a wide variety of extra activities you enjoy. The staff give a lot of thought to the activities, such as the environmental clubs, music and sporting activities. The residential trips are a huge success! By the time you leave the school your test results show that you are doing well in mathematics and you have also done well in your reading. The governing body of the school is trying hard to provide you with better classrooms and a suitable outdoor area for Reception children. The governors know how much you all appreciate the changes that have been made, especially your new hall.

While you are making satisfactory progress, I think you can do better than this. That is why I have asked the school to make sure that more of the teaching is of a good standard. I have asked the school to make sure that the subject leaders are able to carry out their jobs as well as possible so that they can see more quickly if you are not making the progress you should. I have also asked the leaders of the school to do all they can to help you improve your writing.

Thank you once again. I wish you all the best for the future.

Kathleen Yates,

Lead inspector