

Barn Croft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131057
Local Authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	328551
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Rogers

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	249
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Fraser Scott
Headteacher	Mr Martin Lubich
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	2 Brunel Road Walthamstow London E17 8SB
Telephone number	020 8521 1145
Fax number	020 8520 4306

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school with a 20 place Nursery, serving a very diverse population. Pupils come from a wide variety of ethnic groups. A fifth of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English, an above average proportion. Families move in and out of the area more frequently than is usual. The proportion of pupils who claim free school meals is high, at double the national figure. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also twice the national average. The majority of these pupils require extra help with speech and language, but a significant number have behavioural problems. The Young Mens' Christian Association manages after school care on the site that is currently attended by 15 pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures, because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The pupils at this school make poor progress, attaining very low standards in English, mathematics and science and in their personal development, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils underachieve. Teaching, the curriculum, care, support and guidance are all inadequate. Inadequate leadership and management mean that things are not improving and the school is in a worse position than at the time of the last inspection in all areas, except for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has improved. Pupils do not enjoy school as much as they should. They say that, although they like the teachers, they 'could do better'. They are right, as teaching is inadequate. A significant number of parents who responded to the parental questionnaire are critical of the senior leadership of the school as they say that communication is not good enough, relationships with the pupils are weak and that learners are not always well enough cared for. They feel anti-bullying procedures are not effective. Pupils confirm this, saying that they do not always feel safe in the playground. Parents and pupils are correct in stating that the school does not deal with bullying issues well enough and care of the pupils is therefore inadequate.

Leadership and management of the school are inadequate at all levels as leaders do not work effectively as a team. Monitoring of the impact of the school's work to improve pupils' progress lacks rigour. The work of the governing body is inadequate as it has not held the school sufficiently to account for its results over recent years. However, the local authority has begun to intervene and has introduced effective support for the school through the London Challenge initiative. Personnel involved in this scheme understand the school's issues well and their plans address exactly the right areas. New governors have also been instrumental in supporting the new plans and beginning to monitor much more rigorously. However, these initiatives were only introduced last term and as yet there has been no demonstrable impact.

Last term, pupils in some classes had targets that they understood, but this practice has now ceased. Lessons too often lack pace and planning is poorly matched to the abilities of the learners. Pupils are correct in reporting that lessons are sometimes boring. The curriculum is inadequate. As a consequence, pupils do not learn enough about being healthy. The personal development programme is still in its infancy, so learners' personal and social skills are weak for their age. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate. Pupils do not make enough of a positive contribution to the community as their opportunities are very limited. Pupils' poor basic skills make it clear that they are not well enough prepared for the next stages in their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The Reception and Nursery classes have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be inadequate. When children enter the school their knowledge and skills are considerably weaker than would be expected of typical three and four year olds. By the time they enter Year 1, they are working at levels that are still below national expectations. Taking

into account their starting points this represents progress that is satisfactory overall, and is good at times, due to satisfactory teaching. The good progress occurs in children's personal development where they persevere because activities are interesting. Accommodation has been reorganised and both classes share a large, well-planned area. Teachers make useful assessments that help them gauge what the children need to learn next. Planning of activities is thoughtful, making sure that children cover all the necessary areas of learning. However, adults can be over directive and planning focuses too much on what children are to do rather than on what they might learn. This reduces opportunities for children to explore, learn for themselves and discuss how they might improve. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are now satisfactory and parents of children in these classes are very positive in their views.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by improving the quality of teaching so that pupils make at least satisfactory progress. In particular rectify weaknesses in pace, challenge, the use of assessment and the engagement of pupils.
- Ensure that all pupils are safe from bullying, with clear and effective procedures in place to resolve bullying incidents speedily.
- Improve the curriculum, so that it meets the needs of all the pupils, including their personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Ensure that the school is well led and there is a cohesive approach to school improvement, so that all leaders share a common vision and are involved in rigorous monitoring and accurate evaluation.
- Improve communication with parents, particularly ensuring that complaints and concerns are followed up effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Results of national tests in 2008 showed that Year 6 pupils had achieved extremely low standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils throughout the school are working at levels that are well below average. Their progress is variable, but is never better than satisfactory and is too often inadequate. This means that from their very low starting points when they join the school pupils do not catch up and their achievement is inadequate. This is because teaching is not good enough. The school's own assessments suggest that pupils make better progress than they actually do. This indicates that teachers' assessments are inaccurate. The school realised that it had not provided enough support for pupils who were behind in their work and has concentrated most of its additional resources on Year 6 this year. Its efforts are paying off to some degree. However, not all of the support given is of good quality and pupils are still not making the progress that they should. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and those who need help with English is too variable in quality. They consequently also underachieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

Pupils' personal development is inadequate because it is not properly planned into the curriculum. Pupils and parents expressed anxieties that bullying is not effectively dealt with and pupils therefore do not feel as safe as they should. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and behaviour in classrooms is satisfactory. Pupils concentrate reasonably well on their work, even when teaching is uninteresting. However, learners do not get enough done

because lessons proceed too slowly. Playtime behaviour is not always acceptable as misdemeanours are not dealt with effectively and consistently. There are occasional fights and pupils say that there is too much swearing. Pupils' opportunities to contribute to the community are minimal. There is a school council, but it has only met a few times and does not have a clear understanding of its role. Attendance is still below average, but it has improved since the last inspection.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

There is too much inadequate teaching throughout the school and no teaching is better than satisfactory. Pupils cannot therefore make the progress necessary to catch up and reach the expected standards. Lessons often proceed too slowly and topics and tasks chosen do not engage the pupils enough. Gifted pupils are identified, as are pupils who need support with their work. However, teachers' use of assessment is not always accurate enough to ensure that lessons are pitched at the right level. Planning is variable. Where planning is good it makes it clear what support vulnerable pupils will receive. At other times, this information is lacking. Teaching assistants do not receive enough guidance to make sure that they are properly organised to help pupils make good progress. Classroom displays are bright and attractive, but they are not used to support learning effectively. Teachers do not demonstrate methods clearly enough and pupils are therefore unsure exactly what is expected.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The school has recognised the need to review the curriculum to create more links between subjects and make lessons more interesting. Currently, schemes of work are not thorough enough to ensure that aspects of personal development, including social skills, health and safety are fully covered. Pupils spoken to also requested more trips and more clubs to support their work. Daily plans give the necessary information to teach each lesson. However, they are not monitored sufficiently to ensure there is enough detail for staff to know what they should do and that work is tailored to meet the needs of all the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Leaders have recently focused on improving academic guidance. There is more assessment information than previously, but this is not understood well enough by teachers for it to be useful. Teachers were given training on target setting, on marking and on giving pupils' opportunities to evaluate the quality of their own work. However, the implementation of these strategies is still inconsistent. Pupils are unclear about what they have to do to improve their work. Attendance is better because the school has improved its procedures. The school does not keep a record of behavioural incidents and bullying, consequently, concerns are not followed up properly. Parents find the anti bullying policy difficult to understand because procedures are unclear.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The headteacher is reliant on external support and advice to move the school forward. The school is now making more progress, albeit slowly, because of local authority intervention. The deputy headteacher has gained the respect of staff, however other senior managers lack the experience and the capacity to move forward the areas for which they have responsibility. Some policies and documents are not in place. Effective links are being made with the local secondary school, but partnerships in other areas are underdeveloped. Monitoring of the impact of the school's actions is not systematic enough, teachers are not held sufficiently to account and self-evaluation is overly positive. The school therefore does not have the capacity to improve.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	4
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	4
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	4
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	4
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	4
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	4
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barn Croft Primary School, London, E17 8SB

Thank you very much for helping us when we came to inspect your school, especially to the pupils who gave up lunchtime to talk to us. We were pleased to hear that you like your teachers. We can see that staff have worked hard to make your classrooms attractive and to reorganise the early years area. We are happy to say that teaching in the Reception and Nursery is better than it was before. Your parents are pleased with the start you get to your schooling.

However, we were sad to hear that you do not always enjoy school and we agree that lessons could be more interesting. Your school is not providing you with a satisfactory education and so it needs special measures. This means that the school will be visited every term by inspectors until it has improved enough. We have asked the headteacher to:

- make sure you do better in your tests by improving the quality of teaching, checking that the work is always at the right level for you
- make sure the school deals with bullying quickly and effectively
- improve planning for all your lessons so that they are interesting and you are taught everything that you should be, including more that relates to your personal development
- make sure that the leaders of the school work well together so that everything happens as quickly as possible
- make sure that the school follows up any problems or concerns that your parents have.

You can play your part in improving your education by:

- making sure that you always come to school unless you are ill
- developing the school council so that you can give helpful feedback on what you would like to see improve
- working very hard.

Yours faithfully

Sue Rogers

Lead Inspector