

Baring Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100673
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	335574
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Moore
Headteacher	Diane Brewer
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors looked at a wide range of evidence, which included seeing almost all teachers teach as part of the 15 lessons/part lessons observed. They looked at examples of pupils' work and evaluated their progress. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors evaluated a range of documentation, which included such things as the school's improvement planning and leaders' records about the quality of the lessons. In total, 64 parental questionnaires were analysed. Staff and pupils' questionnaires were also evaluated.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement and attainment of the current Year 6 pupils
- if the school is doing enough to help the most able pupils to do better in reading by the end of Year 2
- if all groups of pupils achieve equally well, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups
- how well the school uses assessment strategies, especially marking the key features that possibly make this school so successful.

Information about the school

Baring Primary School is average in size when compared with other primary schools. The school serves a culturally diverse community. One third of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The next largest groups are from Black Caribbean heritages, mixed or Asian heritages. Pupils are also represented from a wide range of other cultural backgrounds. A higher than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' particular needs mostly relate to speech and language or dyslexia, but a wide variety of physical, emotional and learning disabilities are also represented. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Baring Primary is an outstanding school. Since the last inspection, when the school was found to be satisfactory, there has been immense improvement and the school shows an outstanding capacity to continue improving. The vision, enthusiasm and determination of the headteacher is driving school improvement. She is exceptionally well supported by her skilled senior leadership team and all other members of staff. Governors support the school well. It is the dedicated work of all of these people, as a team, that underpins the success of the school. Self-evaluation is rigorous and leads to very good development planning. Decisive action is taken to make sure that plans are implemented. Leaders monitor how well the school is doing so that plans are modified as needed to accelerate the pace of development.

Pupils are friendly, polite and behave well. Notably, they make an outstanding contribution to the community. They benefit from a very rounded education that helps them to really enjoy school and strive to do well. From children's often much lower than expected starting points, they achieve outstandingly well. Pupils' exceptionally good progress is largely a direct result of the combined impact of several key features, which include:

- a systematic and unrelenting development of skills in a wide range of subjects
- consistently good teaching, which includes some outstanding lessons
- the outstanding care, guidance and support provided, including the partnerships with others outside school
- the outstanding and exceptionally varied, lively and interesting curriculum
- the superb emphasis on promoting pupils' speaking skills
- the highly effective provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are learning to speak English as an additional language
- the whole-school ethos that every child should be treated as a unique individual, and equality of opportunities is outstanding.

As a result of these key features, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average and those currently in Year 6 are on track to do better than usually expected. Pupils feel happy and very safe. Leaders are ambitious to ensure that teaching is as good as possible. The school's improvement plan and development initiatives reflect this. Leaders are correctly focused on improving the teaching for the most able pupils, so that their achievement lifts from good to become outstanding in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Build on the work already started to make teaching outstanding overall by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently well challenged in lessons
 - making the very best of ongoing assessments during lessons and developing the quality of teachers' written marking, so that it is of a consistently high standard
 - making sure that younger children in Key Stage 1 are specifically taught how to present their work more neatly and use joined handwriting.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

As the headteacher so correctly said, 'Learning here is for life not just for knowledge'. The exceptional progress that pupils make enables them to be well prepared for their future lives. As pupils move up through the school, their attainment rises quickly step by step. For example, as seen in outstanding lessons when pupils in Year 4 were challenged in learning to plot different co-ordinates and work out problems, such as where the Roman Legionary army had left their armour and weapons; while in Year 6, pupils learnt how to rotate shapes using co-ordinates and then learnt how to draw and rotate the initial letter of their names.

Pupils rarely have unexpected gaps in their skills, unless they are new to the school. Where this occurs, highly effective support enables this group to achieve well and sometimes their achievement is outstanding. All pupils benefit from the excellent focus on promoting speaking skills. This underpins their ability to understand new things and share their ideas. Notably, this enables pupils who are learning English as an additional language to be fully involved in lessons, as seen in the lesson on writing play scripts in Year 3. In particular, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexic pupils, make outstanding progress.

Pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing, and mathematics and in science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and singing by the end of Year 6. Sometimes there are missed opportunities to extend the most able readers and writers in Key Stage 1 and ensure that they present their work neatly, using joined handwriting. Nonetheless, learning is good and ensures that pupils learn basic skills well, as seen when they worked hard on learning letter and sound patterns, which helped them to read and spell accurately. In Year 1, the most able pupils are making much faster progress this year and this bodes well for the future.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy doing things for the school and wider community and they feel exceptionally safe when doing these things. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors about how they are raising funds to improve the play equipment in the nearby Northbrook Park; they took part in a superb street carnival, just before the inspection, to aid their fundraising for this. Other notable contributions include making a film about how boys learn, which is used throughout the United Kingdom. Pupils voiced their opinion by writing letters to Parliament about the atrocities in Sri Lanka. Outstanding art and music work contribute much to pupils' good cultural development. The pupils' singing for

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'Sister Act' was superb. Pupils are curious and embrace new experience. As one pupil said, 'Teachers make you to want to travel the world.' To lift their cultural development to outstanding, leaders appreciate that pupils need a deeper awareness of similarities and differences between different cultures and faiths.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school has thought carefully about the curriculum by providing many visits, visitors and practical activities and an excellent range of clubs. Pupils have had close to 70 visits already this term. These experiences enrich pupils' life experiences outstandingly well and reflect all areas of the curriculum. Teachers use these activities skilfully to help pupils increase their understanding of new vocabulary and speak using more complex sentences. This was seen in Year 1 when pupils used a good range of descriptive words as they talked about their visit to Botany Bay. Some pupils had never been to the beach before and one commented, 'I was so excited I wobbled.' These many experiences help pupils to think hard and get good ideas for their writing.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and, when combined with the curriculum

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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offered, help pupils to build considerable self-esteem, confidence, leadership skills and their emotional well-being, for example through team sports when the hockey team were about to represent Lewisham in a competition at Crystal Palace. At pupils' request, and through governors' monitoring, the school is now offering more history and geography across the range of subjects. Good teaching was seen in these subjects, as evident in the lesson on identifying human and natural features of the environment in Year 2. Teachers are working to provide more opportunities to enable pupils to try out and learn more about enterprise skills. Teachers know their subjects well, and organise and manage lessons in an impressive way, especially for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those learning English as an additional language. There is variation in how well they meet the needs of the most-able pupils in a few lessons. Some teachers assess pupils learning very well in lessons and almost all pupils agree that they know how to improve their learning. This is not fully consistent in all classes and marking is not always highly effective in helping pupils to reach even higher levels of attainment.

Teaching assistants support learning very well, especially when working with groups. Pastoral care is very strong, with outstanding support and monitoring of vulnerable pupils. Pupils are identified at a very early stage if they have made slower overall progress during the term and are very quickly given high quality targeted support. Pupils' attendance is average when compared nationally, but still reflects the school's very good guidance and emphasis on promoting this. There are many links with outside professionals to ensure that pupils' individual needs are fully met. For example, pupils in Year 5 benefitted greatly by talking about their feelings in a good lesson about bereavement.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have improved learning, teaching and the curriculum, in particular. This is as a consequence of rigorous monitoring and helpful feedback to staff about how to improve. Staff have worked as a team to review the curriculum. Senior staff show outstanding teaching skills and share these very willingly with others to help them to further develop their skills. The work of the middle leaders is very impressive in terms of monitoring and evaluating, and tracking of pupils' progress. For example, middle leaders monitor pupils' progress in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills and also check how well

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progress is being made in other subjects such as art. All leaders are relentless in their drive to make teaching outstanding.

Leaders and managers monitor equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination highly effectively and this is enabling the gap to be closed between different groups. In particular, leaders are rapidly lifting the achievement of the most-able, from good to outstanding. Leaders ensure that pupils' welfare is safeguarded well and this is especially the case for vulnerable pupils.

The school has very good links with parents through the family learning project. Parents commented, 'It's a chance to meet other parents' and 'It helps me to help my child.' The school is working well to establish links with hard-to-reach parental groups. Overall, links with parents are good overall and this aids local community cohesion well. Links with other local people are also well established, such as through the 'Big Chair Little Chair' dance group which enables young children to dance with senior citizens. 'The Carnival' and work of the choir also aid community cohesion. The premises manager organises a local talent show and there are close links with a school in Sierra Leone and one in Dartford. Opportunities to widen awareness about different faiths and to understand more about the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom are still developing. Work on the 'Desmond Tutu peace project' is a strong example of the way that the school helps pupils to learn about and respect others in the wider world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of outstanding leadership, children are making outstanding progress from

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their often low starting points; this has been rising in the last two years and especially so this year. As a result, attainment by the end of the Reception Year is at least average. This year shows further improvement in the proportion of children who are working at higher than expected levels, especially in their speaking, reading and basic counting skills. There is still room for this level to be equally high in their creative development and in their understanding of shape, space and measures, and staff are keen to work on improving this.

Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding as it accelerates children's achievement and progress especially well. Teachers provide exciting challenging activities, which help children to think, talk about what they are doing, sustain concentration and work cooperatively with others. For example, children delighted at exploring the flow of water and different pressures when using syringes. Adults interject into children's learning by skilfully modelling longer sentences and by extending children's use of new words, as seen when children watched the development of their tadpoles. There is a rigorous focus on developing reading. Links with parents are excellent, as seen in their use of home activity bags. Welfare and the care of children are extremely good.

Assessment procedures are exemplary and make superb use of computer technology. For example, teachers use digital pens to make notes about what children are doing and as a result they quickly add these to pupils' individual records. The use of digital dictaphones enables adults to capture children's conversations and points of language development very well. Teaching assistants are becoming more skilled at uploading the information from the digital technology so that they can support teachers in doing this as much as possible.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school and almost all are very happy with the school. They said such things as, 'Dedicated, caring and enthusiastic staff' and 'School outings are in abundance'. There was unanimous agreement that their children feel safe. Almost all agree that teaching is good and that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. A very few noted that they do not agree that their children are well prepared for the future or that their comments and suggestions are taken account of. A very few also felt that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with

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effectively enough. Inspectors found that pupils are well prepared for the future and that staff skilfully support pupils with behaviour difficulties, without their difficulties impacting on the learning of others.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Baring Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	66	18	28	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	59	23	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	50	26	41	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	47	29	45	1	2	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	36	56	24	38	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	59	22	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	50	27	42	1	2	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	42	28	44	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	45	27	42	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	47	23	36	3	5	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	47	25	39	3	5	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	37	58	22	34	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	66	17	27	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Baring Primary School, London SE12 0NB

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we spoke to you. I am delighted to tell you that your school is outstanding. You say that you like school, learn new things well and have plenty of fun things to do, and we agree. You especially like the care shown by staff and we agree that this is superb. Your teachers have been working hard to improve your school and they are to be congratulated for this, so please remember to say thank you to them. Also, you have been working very hard to do your best; congratulations on this and please keep this up. This means that you make very good progress in learning new things. Well done for behaving well, and you should be very proud of your exceptional contribution to the community. We so enjoyed listening to your very high quality singing for 'Sister Act' and seeing the lively film of the 'Carnival'. We can see why you all have such fun at school and why the many visits help you to learn outstandingly well.

As a very successful school, there is not too much that needs improving. But all of the adults are very keen to keep making things better for you, which is very impressive. We agree with them that teaching, although good, is not always outstanding. We have asked the adults to work on three things:

- helping those of you who find learning easy to have plenty of challenges in lessons, especially in Years 1 and 2 for reading and writing
- developing the way that teachers mark your work so that you know how to develop your skills as well as possible
- making sure that younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught exactly how to present their work more neatly and use joined handwriting.

Please continue to work hard and keep doing wonderful pieces of art work!

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons

Lead inspector

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