

# Barleyhurst Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110327
<b>Local Authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	337469
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lisa Rodriguez
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Green
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 May 2010
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons taught by seven teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, the school's assessment information, safeguarding policies, pupils' work and analysed 31 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- the consistency of teaching and how well it provides the right level of challenge for all pupils
- the impact of leaders on driving school improvement
- how well pupils understand how to improve their work and take on responsibility for their learning
- the effectiveness of the school's systems for monitoring and improving attendance.

## Information about the school

The school opened in September 2008 following the merger of the neighbouring infant and junior schools. It moved into newly refurbished buildings in June 2009. This is the school's first inspection.

Pupils come from the local community as well as from other parts of Milton Keynes. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most, but not all, of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. However, there are a small number of pupils from other ethnic groups including those of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average.

Pre-school provision shares the school site but is not managed by the governing body.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was on sick leave and the school was being led by the two deputy headteachers. A new headteacher takes up post in September 2010.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

This satisfactory school is moving forward steadily after a period of turbulence caused by the merger, the consequent need for staff restructuring and the absence of senior leaders. The school's deputy headteachers have done a sterling job in holding things together during this time of uncertainty. Their good efforts mean that the school continues to run smoothly and the focus on tackling weaknesses has been maintained. Staff report that morale is improving; leaders are now building on this by ensuring that all staff feel valued and are able to contribute to school improvement.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and then make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school. Pupils' attainment is improving and it is broadly average by the end of Year 6. Whilst there is some good teaching, too much is of satisfactory quality. Inconsistency in the match of work to all pupils' needs is the main factor preventing more teaching from being good across the school.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn to value and respect each other, as well as the importance of behaving sensibly. They keenly take on responsibility outside lessons by being school councillors or play leaders. However, they are given few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning within lessons and their understanding of how to improve their work is patchy. This is best in English where marking and target setting are strongest. Most pupils enjoy school and behave well. They particularly like the way visits and visitors are used to support their learning. Pupils' good artwork is displayed around school, although there is little else that celebrates their achievements or values their efforts.

The school has satisfactory systems for evaluating its work, but the rigour of monitoring is often restricted by some senior leaders' unrealistic workloads. Self-evaluation is used to drive improvement but, despite recent refinements, development planning does not always show how this is to be measured. Nonetheless, although the pace of change has been slower than they would like due to the absence of key staff, leaders at all levels are doing the right things to move the school forward. They have demonstrated a satisfactory capacity for further improvement through the effective use of accurate self-evaluation to close the gap in attainment between English, mathematics and science and by raising attendance to broadly average levels through rigorously monitoring and supporting pupils and families.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build the school's capacity to improve more quickly by:

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- ensuring that development planning shows clearly how success is to be measured
- reviewing responsibilities so that leaders have realistic workloads and are given time to monitor provision more sharply
- working together so that all staff feel they are valued members of the new school team.
- Move satisfactory teaching to good by:
  - ensuring that teachers always pitch work at the right level for all pupils
  - making more use of marking and target setting to help pupils understand how to improve their work, especially in mathematics and science.
- Do more to celebrate pupils' successes and give them greater responsibility for their own learning in lessons.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory, with test data and lesson observations showing that no group does significantly better or worse than any other. Most pupils are happy at school, but progress in lessons is inconsistent. In a science lesson, for example, older pupils quickly extended their understanding of how to carry out a fair test by devising ways to measure wind resistance. They were encouraged to think like scientists and enthusiastically explored their own ideas to solve the challenge. In a numeracy lesson, Year 1 pupils showed great interest and made good progress in learning about time because their work was linked to a literacy theme based on Peter Pan. This captured their enthusiasm for learning and the activities were purposeful and fun. However, this is not always the case. Where progress is satisfactory, the pace of learning is not fast enough because work is not pitched at the right level for the different ability groups within the class. For example, numeracy work given to pupils who were practising their times tables was too easy for some and too hard for others. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. As with other pupils, there are occasions when work is not pitched at the right level for them, and their learning slows. Teachers focus well on ensuring that pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English understand what is being taught and this means that they make the same satisfactory progress as others in most lessons. Pupils take good care of each other and develop good confidence and self-esteem. They work hard most of the time, although they do not always present their work neatly enough. Pupils develop a sound understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and have some good ideas about how they can improve this further. For example, the school council is planning to introduce a healthy tuck shop to promote healthy lifestyles.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Adults make school a welcoming learning environment and ensure that pupils are able to talk about concerns they may have. Support for children who need additional help is suitably targeted and ensures that they improve their skills steadily. Pupils are given sound academic support. It is best in English where targets help pupils to know the next step in their learning, but is less well developed in mathematics and science.

Teachers work hard to make lessons enjoyable and maintain good relationships with pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and have a good impact on learning. Where teaching and learning are good, assessment information is used well to plan the next steps in learning. However, this is not yet consistent in all lessons. Teachers conscientiously mark work, but written comments do not always show how learning can be moved on, especially in mathematics and science.

The curriculum soundly promotes basic literacy and numeracy skills, but pupils have too few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning in lessons. Leaders are working hard to improve the curriculum. A recent focus on improving pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science has, for example, improved attainment in these subjects.

The curriculum is enhanced by a good number of visits and by links with a secondary school that supports the teaching of German. However, sporting opportunities, despite the school's excellent facilities, are relatively limited.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school is emerging from a period of significant transition with a renewed sense of purpose. The morale of staff has improved significantly in recent times and the ambition and drive for improvement of senior leaders are becoming more firmly embedded and understood across the school. There is a good understanding of priorities, including the need to tackle inconsistencies in teaching and to ensure that all staff feel an important part of the team. However, this is not always reflected in the school development plan which lacks detail about how progress is to be checked. Leaders analyse data thoroughly to see how well different groups of pupils are doing, but some staff are expected to take on too much responsibility. This means there is not enough time to monitor all aspects of the school's work with sufficient rigour. Governors are enthusiastic and are beginning to provide the right sort of challenge for leaders.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. Consequently, pupils from different backgrounds get on well together and progress is becoming more even across the school. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of life in multicultural Britain but their knowledge of life in other parts of the world is less strong.

The school has satisfactory safeguarding procedures. Adults give safety and security a high priority but some policies have not been updated to reflect changes since the two schools merged.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents are rightly pleased with provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children make good progress and are given a good start to their education. When they start school, few children are working at the levels expected for their age. They are taught well and this means that children’s attainment rises to broadly average levels by the start of Year 1. Children make especially good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They develop good levels of confidence and sensibly select for themselves where they are going to work. Activities build well on children’s natural curiosity and encourage them to think for themselves. Teachers meet effectively children’s differing needs most of the time, although just occasionally the more able could be challenged more. There is a good curriculum that is enhanced significantly by the superb accommodation and the wide range of resources both indoors and outdoors. Provision is carefully monitored and there is a clear understanding of what to develop next. For example, leaders know that children’s attainment has been slightly lower in knowledge and understanding of the world than in the other areas of learning. They are rightly tackling this by ensuring that work in this area of learning is integrated more fully into outdoor activities.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires returned was low, but most were positive about the work of the school. Positive comments included, “My children have always enjoyed coming to school,” and, “My children are gaining in confidence.” About a fifth of parents and carers raised concerns about aspects of the school’s work. Some parents and carers were not happy with the way that the school tackles unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors found that the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any occasional bullying and no unacceptable behaviour was observed during the inspection. Several



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parents mentioned the lack of a rewards system. Inspectors agree that the school does not do enough to celebrate and reward pupils' efforts and successes. Other concerns about leadership and management and pupils' progress are reported on elsewhere in the report.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	81	5	16	0	0	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	23	74	7	23	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	61	8	26	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	55	6	19	4	13	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	21	68	8	26	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	61	5	16	2	6	2	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	55	13	42	0	0	1	3
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)	11	35	16	52	1	3	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	42	12	39	2	6	2	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	42	5	16	6	19	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	35	13	42	2	6	2	6
The school is led and managed effectively	12	39	11	35	5	16	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	55	11	35	1	3	2	6

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



6 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Barleyhurst Park Primary School, Milton Keynes MK3 7NA

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school recently. You are very lucky to be able to work in such a wonderful building! At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You do well in the Reception Year where you are taught well. Satisfactory teaching means that you then make steady progress in the rest of the school.
- You behave well most of the time and enjoy lots of things about school, especially visits and visitors.
- You know who to turn to if you have a worry and you feel that you are kept safe. We are pleased that you are keen to take responsibility and hope that the healthy tuck shop project goes well.
- All adults in school are caring and give you suitable help when you have problems with your work.
- Leaders are doing the right things to move the school forward and are clear about what still needs improving

Your teachers know that there is still work to be done to make the school even better. We have suggested three things that we think will help.

- Hasten the pace of improvement by ensuring that leaders do not take on too many extra responsibilities, have clear plans about what they need to improve next and help everyone feel they are an important part of the new school team.
- Check that your teachers always expect enough of you and are using marking to help you understand how to improve your work, especially in mathematics and science
- Do more to celebrate your work and to increase the opportunities for you to take responsibility for your own learning in lessons.

We wish you all well for the future. You can help your teachers by trying to present your work neatly all of the time.

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper  
Lead Inspector

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