

Barden Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119260
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339392
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Sheridan HMI

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	388
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Geoff Balson
Headteacher	Mr Simon Smalley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The majority of inspection time was spent observing learning and inspectors observed 15 teachers in 29 lessons. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, governors and members of staff from other schools within the campus. They observed the school's work and looked at policy documents, the school's tracking data, pupils' work in books, reports from the local authority and the school's own records. Inspectors also scrutinised returned questionnaires from 119 parents and carers, and from staff and pupils.

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

- the impact of the school's actions on improving attainment in writing
- the effect of partnership working with the other organisations sharing the campus
- the impact the school is having on improving attendance.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average, with most pupils in the school having a Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are catered for in the Reception class. This school was formed in 2007 with the amalgamation of an infant and junior school. In 2008 the school moved premises to be part of the Burnley Campus. The school now shares a building, grounds and facilities with a nursery school and children's centre, a sixth form, a special school, a faith centre and a public library. These six partners work together to provide a full range of extended services through a social enterprise company. The school has gained several awards, including Lancashire Race Equality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and a learning excellence award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and improving school. It provides an exciting education for the pupils it serves. Pupils' achievement is good and attainment, from below average starting points, is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6. Pupils are immensely proud to be part of their school. They appreciate the interesting and lively curriculum and the good-quality teaching. They are very enthusiastic about the exceptional facilities available to them through the innovative partnerships that exist with the other schools on the campus.

This school is an outstandingly cohesive community. Pupils and staff get along with each other exceptionally well. The school has been innovative in the ways that it enables pupils to engage with other young people from a variety of backgrounds, locally, nationally and globally. The school plays a pivotal role in extending the horizons of many young people in the school and this contributes significantly to their good personal development.

Attendance is low. This is largely, but not exclusively, due to the high number of long absences caused by extended travel. There is a clear link between this absenteeism and the slower progress of some pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's systems to identify specific barriers to learning are not sufficiently developed. As a result, the support some pupils receive does not enable them to catch up quickly with their peers. This leads to satisfactory rates of progress for these pupils rather than the good progress made by most of their peers. Leaders drive the school's improvement with determination and a clear vision. They have successfully managed the amalgamation and move into the campus, maintaining the enthusiastic support and commitment of staff. Their self-evaluation is accurate and they have taken effective steps to continue the school's impressive improvement. School leaders, including governors, have a full understanding of the next steps they need to take to improve the school further. Their recent success in, for example, improving the quality of writing and developing the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum demonstrates a strong capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance to be in line with the national average by:
 - working closely with the local authority in determining the best way to reduce the significant number of pupils with attendance below 80%
 - redoubling efforts to ensure that parents and carers recognise the links

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between attainment and attendance

- frequently reviewing the impact of the actions taken to promote regular attendance and adapting these in light of the best practice identified by the local authority's consultants.
- Improve the rates of progress made by pupils who fall behind by:
 - developing systems to identify quickly specific barriers to learning
 - developing a capacity to deliver specific intervention strategies that focus on identifying missed learning and plugging essential gaps
 - developing the skills of all teaching assistants so they are able to deliver highly specific support to individuals and groups in class.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy their learning a great deal. They are highly motivated by the exciting opportunities teachers provide for them in most lessons. Pupils work well in groups and as individuals. They ask questions, think deeply and respond thoughtfully. They are anxious to please and respond enthusiastically to teachers' guidance on how to improve their work. This is particularly striking in pupils' written work where good-quality marking leads to rapid improvements. Attainment has risen in the school over recent years and achievement is good overall. Most pupils now make good progress. However, when pupils fall behind, they too often do not make the accelerated progress needed to catch up quickly.

Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They know how to stay safe in a range of situations and understand the dangers that are associated with different activities. They say that there is hardly any bullying in school. Pupils are very confident that adults in school will take their concerns seriously. Pupils' behaviour is almost always good throughout the school. It only slips a little in the few satisfactory lessons where motivation to succeed is not as high.

Pupils are developing a wider sense of cultural awareness. They have a strong sense of personal identity and recognise with increasing clarity the rich cultural diversity in their local area and in the wider country. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness is a strength in the school. Pupils engage in discussions and debates, taking into account with exceptional maturity the views and feelings of others. This contributes to the outstandingly cohesive school community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Continuing improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum are at the heart of this school's improvement. The curriculum has been effectively organised to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in exciting and practical ways. Pupils learn through interesting topics with titles such as 'chocolate' and 'the history of toys'. These ignite pupils' curiosity. Most of the teaching seen during the inspection was good. Teachers are skilled at designing lessons that focus pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. Expectations are high and pupils work hard to meet these. The effectiveness of teaching assistants varies throughout the school. In the best lessons support staff have a very clear understanding about how to support and guide individuals or groups. However, in some lessons teaching assistants merely encourage completion of tasks without any real understanding of the strategies needed to accelerate learning for those pupils who had fallen behind in the past.

Many of the facilities available to this school are provided through the innovative partnerships that exist between the partners at Burnley Campus. The campus is an imposing building in the community and partners use this position to its full potential as a base for a range of services to support families and the wider community. Pupils benefit well from these joint working relationships. For example, children in the Reception class share a well-equipped Early Years department with the co-located nursery school, pupils regularly use the excellent sporting facilities available through the sixth form and the sixth form theatre spaces and lecture theatres are also often used to enhance special lessons or to add capacity for school performances.

The school's pastoral systems are well organised. Established systems make sure

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potentially vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and effectively supported. This work has a positive impact on the behaviour and self-esteem of individuals which subsequently improves their achievement. The school has employed an attendance officer who is having some success in reducing absenteeism, particularly with pupils who have regular short absences. The school's learning mentor provides additional support and guidance to pupils and families.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders, including governors, have secured a strong base for this school to continue to improve. Despite the challenges of reorganisation, leaders have maintained a sharp focus on the need to improve outcomes for pupils. They have managed this transition with the full support of staff and increasingly positive support from parents and carers. Their self-evaluation is accurate. The impressive improvements seen in provision are a result of the concerted actions of all staff in the school. Leaders at all levels recognise where improvements are still to be made and the school's action plan clearly points to credible strategies to continue to improve.

Systems for safeguarding pupils are effectively evaluated and rigorously enforced. All statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. Governors play a key role in challenging the school and holding it to account for its performance. Individual governors provide additional support to the school by using their personal expertise in developing the school's provision and facilities further.

Leaders are effective in promoting equality of opportunity. Their actions, based on careful tracking of different groups, have been well placed to improve equality for different groups in the school. The school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion is based on a thorough analysis of the school's context. It has led to a range of activities, partnerships and opportunities that are highly effective in celebrating diversity and preparing pupils to work with others from a range of backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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	
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get a good a start in the Reception class. They enjoy the wide range of interesting activities both indoors and in the extensive outside area. Children achieve well because the teaching is lively and well matched to individuals' learning needs. Although most do not reach the nationally expected learning goals by the end of Reception, children make good progress from their generally low starting points. Children's personal development is fostered especially well. As a result, most quickly learn to cooperate with each other and behave well. Parents and carers are very happy with the quality of education provided in the Reception class.

In this well-run provision, staff are skilled at assessing and meeting children's learning needs. They ensure a well-judged balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves in the indoor part of the provision. Occasionally, however, opportunities are missed for adults to intervene to make sure that children make the most of self-selected activities to further their learning, particularly when learning outdoors.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

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A third of parents and carers returned questionnaires and they were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They say that their children enjoy school and most are happy with their children's experiences. A few parents and carers highlighted individual concerns regarding behaviour, the limited size of buildings and the quality of school meals. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views or to suggest that these views are widely held.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Barden 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 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 388 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	56	47	39	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	82	69	36	30	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	50	50	42	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	37	66	55	8	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	50	53	45	5	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	42	60	50	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	49	51	43	6	5	0	0
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)	43	36	65	55	6	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	33	72	61	8	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	45	50	42	13	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	35	63	53	12	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	59	50	49	41	6	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	50	51	43	7	6	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.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barden Primary School, Burnley, BB10 1JD

You may remember that we inspected your school recently. This letter is to let you know what we found out.

We found that your school is a good school.

- You make good progress in your lessons because you work hard and enjoy the interesting lessons your teachers prepare for you.
- Your school does a really good job of helping you understand about the rich diversity of Britain. We thought it was a really good idea to get you to mix with pupils from other schools through sporting activities and special events like the diversity week.
- We saw that you have lots of fantastic facilities in the campus. Most pupils of your age don't have regular access to these.

We have asked your school to work on a few things to make your school even better.

- Too many of you take too much time off school. We have asked your school to encourage you to take less time off school and to encourage your parents and carers to make sure of this.
- We have also found that when some of you fall behind in your learning (and this includes those of you who take long holidays) you find it hard to catch up. We have asked your school to get better at supporting you in catching up on the important knowledge that you may have missed in the past.

I would like to finish by thanking all of you for your politeness and help during this inspection. We found you all to be real ambassadors for your school.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan

Her Majesty's Inspector

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