

Barton CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110829
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310430
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Cathy Martin
Headteacher	Miss Sue Carpenter
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2004
School address	School Lane Barton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB3 7BD
Telephone number	01223 262474
Fax number	01223 262011

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Barton is a Church aided village primary school. It is smaller than average, and pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but is generally in line with national expectations. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds. Approximately one in five pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities and two pupils have statements of special educational need. The school has gained the Sport England Activemark and Investors in People awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which promotes a strong family ethos. This contributes to the outstanding personal development and well-being and the good achievement of pupils. Parents speak highly of the caring atmosphere, 'My child is very well cared for and the school has a very friendly ethos' said one, echoing the views of many. Pupils and parents are proud of its friendly nature where everyone gets on well together. Pupils enjoy school a great deal. They have positive attitudes to their learning and report that the best lessons are 'interesting' and 'fun'. Pupils respond well to lessons and to the good teaching. Their behaviour is outstanding. Good attendance reflects their considerable enjoyment of school life.

Good progress in the Foundation Stage means that most, but not all pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those expected for their age. This strong base is built upon well in Key Stages 1 and 2. Although standards vary from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils involved, they are above and often well above average by the time pupils leave school. The school tracks pupils' progress effectively and this ensures that they receive good support where needed. For example, those pupils identified as being in danger of underachieving in reading are given appropriate help to make sure they reach their potential. Standards and progress in reading are particularly good.

Care, guidance and support are good overall, and the school is highly effective in providing excellent pastoral care to pupils. This helps them to become increasingly confident learners. Nevertheless, some pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of their targets. Teaching and learning are good overall although the marking of pupils' work does not always provide sufficient feedback to them on their progress. This means that pupils have too little understanding of what they have done well and where they need to improve. The curriculum is good and pupils benefit from the wide range of additional activities that enhance learning. However, occasionally activities are not interesting or stimulating enough. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school's development and she receives helpful support from governors and staff, who are dedicated to the school's continued development. This, together with the good progress made since the last inspection, results in a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with a range of abilities, but most are in line with expected levels for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in the area of personal development. This is because all staff care for children and make a strong contribution by encouraging them to be independent and providing many opportunities to take responsibility. There is good liaison with parents and carers enabling children to settle quickly into the well thought out routines. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a good balance between teacher directed and child-initiated activities thereby developing their independence further. Although activities are appropriate to meet children's learning needs, the outdoor provision is underdeveloped and so limits opportunities to extend learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of personal targets in lessons so that pupils can better understand how well they are doing and be more involved in their own learning.

- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils receive better guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Develop the curriculum by extending the use of a thematic approach to learning to stimulate and interest learning for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most children reach levels of attainment that are above those expected for their age. The good rate of progress is maintained through Key Stage 1 and 2, reflecting the high standards reached. The school's effective tracking system enables support to be promptly given to pupils and ensures that they make good progress across the curriculum in relation to their capability and starting points. The very strong provision for reading results in high levels of attainment across the school. Attainment in writing has recently improved and is now good overall. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), a weakness at the last inspection, have risen sharply and are now good. The high calibre of music provision also enables pupils to reach high standards in this subject. Those pupils who receive additional support to avoid potential underachievement or those who find learning more difficult, make good progress throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because they respond very positively to the many opportunities provided to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to and take on responsibilities within the school community. They show outstanding social development, for example, in the caring way older pupils help younger ones at lunchtimes and in the playground when they first start school. They know how to stay healthy. They eat healthy lunches and appreciate the opportunities to take exercise. Attendance, although good, is affected by holidays taken in term time. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school, local and wider communities. They have a good awareness of the needs of others and show this by raising funds to help them. Pupils act responsibly without supervision when carrying out a range of duties independently and this makes an extremely valuable contribution to school life. Pupils are confident and respond well to opportunities to implement their own ideas. They feel safe at school and are confident that adults will help them with any problems that arise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers prepare lessons well to meet the varying needs of learners. Clear learning objectives ensure that pupils know what they have to do in their work. In the best lessons, activities are interesting and stimulating, and this holds pupils' attention and adds to their enjoyment. Pupils learn well independently and they collaborate effectively when working in groups. Occasionally teachers use skilful questioning to encourage pupils to think more deeply, but some teachers are better at this than others. The use of marking is underdeveloped. It does not tell pupils well enough what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. Relationships

between adults and pupils in classrooms are strong because there is mutual respect shown. Pupils' concentration is very good in lessons, particularly when they are actively involved in their learning. In less effective lessons, work is less interesting and teachers do not allow pupils sufficient time to develop their own ideas. The good support offered by teaching assistants ensures that pupils who find learning more difficult make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a well-balanced range of experiences within mixed-age classes without repeating pupils' learning. Planning is effective and enables teachers to teach to their strengths. The curriculum is often taught imaginatively, enabling good progress and adding to pupils' enjoyment of lessons. However, this approach is not consistently used. Additional support, such as mathematics lessons delivered by the local Village College, help to extend the curriculum and challenge the more able. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned for across all years and contributes directly to the very positive outcomes in personal development. Pupils particularly enjoy the many opportunities to partake in musical activities in school and in various community events, such as church services and the village fete. Take up for the wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities is high. These support learning well and add to pupils' enjoyment of school life. The school has made significant improvements to ICT provision and this has led to a rapid acquisition of associated skills. The school is increasing its use of themed days and weeks, such as the recent 'Healthy Eating Week' and 'Viking Day', which are enjoyed by pupils because they help their learning and provide lasting memories.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's strong Christian values inform its care for pupils. The highly effective care and support are rooted in strong relationships between staff and pupils. Those who need additional help or those who find learning more difficult are effectively helped because the school identifies them quickly and continues to support their progress carefully. The excellent personal, social and health education programme is outstanding in promoting pupils' personal and emotional development and strongly adds to their understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are securely implemented and meet requirements. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. Pupils have personal learning targets but their use is inconsistent and teachers do not refer to these sufficiently in marking or in lessons. Consequently, opportunities to involve pupils more in their learning are not sufficiently developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads effectively with a clear focus on raising standards and improving achievement within a caring environment. She has a clear and accurate view of the school. The school development plan is built upon effective evaluation procedures informed by regular monitoring of the school's work by the headteacher and governors. Through this the school accurately recognises its strengths and areas for improvement. The headteacher has supported standards of teaching and learning by providing appropriate additional help for those who need it. The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively holds it to account for its

performance. Governors are actively involved in planning the development of the school. Staff are enthusiastic and work effectively to bring about progress. However, as a small school, the headteacher takes on most of the responsibility for leadership and management decisions. As a result of this, the leadership roles of some teachers have not been fully developed. Nevertheless, with the evident good teamwork of staff and governors, the school is well placed to make further improvement.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barton CE Primary School, Barton, Cambridge CB3 7BD

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I would like to tell you what I learned about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. There are many things that I liked about your school.

Some of them are:

- you behave very well and get on well with each other
- you like taking responsibility in classrooms and around school and you do this very well
- you achieve above average standards in your work
- you learn a lot in lessons and make good progress because the teaching you receive is good
- all of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after
- your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are making sure that you get a good education.

I agree with your parents that you go to a good school. All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. I think that the most important thing for them to do is to improve the marking of your work to help you understand better what to do next. I have asked your teachers to help you become more involved in your learning by giving you clearer targets. I have also asked them to make lessons even more exciting and interesting.

I enjoyed talking with you and finding out all about your good school. Keep on working hard, doing your very best and enjoying your time at school.

Ian Jones

Lead inspector