

Brierley CE (VC) Primary School

Beech Close, Brierley, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S72 9EJ

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make excellent gains in their learning because the headteacher and staff are united in their determination to get the very best for and from every pupil.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well because much of the teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and pupils rise to the challenge and delight in learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are very welcoming, kind and courteous and take a great deal of pride in their work and in their school. Pupils say they feel very safe and very well looked after at school and show high levels of care for each other.
- Attendance has risen markedly since the previous inspection. However, despite the significant improvements made school leaders are aware that attendance is not yet as high as they would like it to be. They have clear plans in place to help ensure attendance improves still further.
- Leaders and managers know the school extremely well and are rigorous in their self-evaluation. They plan in meticulous detail to ensure that pupils receive the highest quality education.
- The rich and wide curriculum is designed to capture pupils' interests and imagination.
- Governors have considerable expertise and a keen insight and provide a great deal of support. Through rigorous monitoring, they challenge the school to ensure it is doing as well as it can.
- There is a strong sense of community and purpose. Every child is made to feel they really do matter.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Parents who made their views known to the inspection team believe that 'children flourish at Brierley Primary'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and made several other short visits to lessons to observe teaching and learning.
- They scrutinised pupils' work, observed break times and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school staff, senior leaders, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- A number of documents were examined. These included the school's view of its own performance, records of the checks made on teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and took account of the views of parents from informal discussions and correspondence.
- Inspectors analysed responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire about the school and took account of the school's own questionnaires from pupils and parents.

Inspection team

Fiona Gowers, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jim Alexander

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, come from armed forces families and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.
- The number on roll has risen significantly since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils who join the school at other than the usual times is greater than that found nationally.
- The headteacher supports other schools as a Local Leader in Education and the school has operated as a 'Lead Literacy School' for a local university over the past four years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Keep a careful watch on the significantly improved strategies to increase attendance to ensure actions taken are successful.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- This is a school that has an unwavering commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all its pupils.
- When children start school there is a wide spread of ability. Although some children's skills are in line with those expected for their age, the majority have skills that are below those expected and sometimes well below. However, children get off to a flying start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most children make better than expected progress.
- Rapid progress continues throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment has been above average since the previous inspection. This represents outstanding achievement relative to pupils' individual starting points.
- The school is very highly regarded by parents and the number on the school's roll rose significantly following a restructuring in 2011. This rapid expansion has led to a little fluctuation in overall attainment levels in some classes. However, lesson observations and scrutiny of the work and progress records of pupils who are new to the school, show that such pupils do just as well as other pupils in school. This is because of a prompt assessment of their needs and the warm welcome they receive.
- The school has high aspirations for all its pupils. The needs of each individual pupil are very carefully analysed. Those who are most-able are continually stretched and challenged and an increasing proportion of pupils are reaching the higher levels in national tests and assessments.
- Pupils with lower starting points and those with special educational needs are helped swiftly to make up lost ground and to do as well as they can. As a result, almost all pupils reach the expected level in English and in mathematics by the end of Year 6, and this has been the case for several years.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress across a wide range of subjects is high. Pupils read widely and often and with great enthusiasm, as one pupil exclaimed: 'I cannot stop reading. I love it!' Wide-ranging opportunities to write in different subjects has helped accelerate progress in pupils' written work. Regular problem-solving activities, which consolidate and extend pupils' numeracy skills help them do just as well in mathematics.
- The school has been very successful in helping pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium funding reach their full potential. Indeed, the school has been asked by a national organisation to become a model of best practice and help other schools maximise their use of the additional funding. Many pupils in receipt of the funding make rapid progress and attain significantly higher standards than pupils nationally and attain as well as other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because all staff share their excitement and passion about learning with their pupils.
- Teachers use what they know of pupils' starting points and interests to plan highly relevant and enjoyable topics. Across the school, teachers' subject knowledge is impressive and very effective links are made between subjects.
- Teachers use information and communication technology confidently as a very effective tool to support pupils' learning.
- Highly-skilled teaching assistants work alongside teachers and pupils ensuring that any pupil who needs support receives prompt attention.
- The quality of guidance during lessons is focused and individually tailored for each pupil. This means each pupil gets the challenge and encouragement required. This excellent guidance during lessons is matched by pupils' eagerness to learn and work positively.

- Teachers make learning enjoyable by setting tasks that are practical and require pupils to learn together. It is not uncommon to hear pupils sensibly cheer when they discover what learning activities they are going to undertake that day. During a Key Stage 2 science investigation, one pupil exclaimed to an inspector: 'This is fun! Would you like to join in?'
- One of the many notable strengths within the Early Years Foundation Stage is how well adults equip children to become independent and resilient learners. These skills are then built upon as pupils move into Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Reading is a strong aspect of the school's work and is used very well to extend learning across the curriculum. For example, children in the Reception class very much enjoyed reading 'The Little Red Hen' together. The focus greatly motivated the children to work with gusto to help the Little Red Hen bake some bread, as they very carefully explored how the ingredients changed in the baking process.
- From an early age, pupils are stretched and challenged to think hard and improve their work. In a Key Stage 1 lesson pupils loved tasting some chocolate. This motivated them to come up with some highly imaginative and descriptive words and phrases to express what it tasted like, in preparation for their poetry writing.
- Older pupils thoroughly enjoyed collecting data to compare how many 'number one' hits the 'Beatles' and 'The Rolling Stones' had had. They presented their findings using a range of graphs, endeavouring to find out which was the best band!
- Learning activities are very skilfully adapted to help pupils with special educational needs maximise their achievement. For example, some pupils had ample opportunity to explore their ideas through drama and role-play activities as a prelude to starting their written work.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Relationships are strong and a keen love of learning permeates the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Woven into the fabric of all this school does is the excellent development of pupils' personal and social skills.
- Pupils' consistently positive attitudes to learning are a significant factor in the progress they are making in lessons. They show an impressive level of maturity and self-reliance.
- They are taught to take a great deal of pride in their work and the quality of work in books and around school is high.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are extremely friendly and polite and quick to recognise and support the needs of others. They told inspectors that the excellent behaviour seen in and around the school during the inspection was typical of behaviour generally.
- Pupils overwhelmingly say they feel extremely safe in school and they are confident they would turn to any adult if they have any concerns.
- Pupils are well aware of all types of bullying and speak knowledgeably about e-safety, for example. Pupils are very positive about the high level of care and support provided by the school. They explain when rare problems do occur then adults in school help them to quickly resolve any difficulties.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly average. Procedures to follow up any non-attendance are rigorous. School leaders have set high targets to improve attendance further, to reduce the number of holidays taken during term time and to avoid any unnecessary absence.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is utterly determined that every pupil receives the best possible education and care. To this end he has very skilfully fostered the leadership skills of his staff team.

- He is very well supported by a very strong senior leadership team. Their crystal clear plan for the school and uncompromising drive for improvement is shared by all.
- This is a school where staff feel validated and valued and that their views and opinions matter. Astute delegation of roles by the headteacher provides staff with frequent opportunities to lead changes and improve the school's work.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and are themselves models of best practice. Rigorous monitoring, focused support, and challenging performance management procedures, have helped ensure that much of the teaching is typically outstanding.
- The local authority have full confidence in the school's leadership and consider it only necessary to maintain a monitoring role. In fact, the school is regarded so highly by the local authority it is used to support other schools both in the locality and further afield.
- The continuous professional development of staff is given very high priority. Indeed a significant proportion of staff are involved in national training programmes of study, as well as other additional training. As a result, middle leaders have developed the skills to accelerate progress in their subject areas.
- The leadership and delivery of special educational needs provision is impressive and well-established. This explains the excellent progress made in lessons and over time.
- The school benefits significantly from the broad range of partnerships it has established, such as through shared training and moderation with a collaboration with four other local schools. It also plays a leading role in helping other schools improve their practice. This is through direct support provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff, as well as the support provided to trainee teachers in its role as a 'Lead Literacy school'.
- The curriculum promotes a thirst for learning. Seamless links are made between subjects in lessons, so that skills in mathematics, for example, are developed in other subjects. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well and contributes very well to their academic achievement.
- The school makes very good use of additional funding provided. Pupil premium funding is used to very good effect through a range of focused support. The additional Primary School Sport funding is being used to provide specialist coaching to help teachers develop particular areas of expertise, as well to improve pupils' achievement in physical education. The school has seen increasing participation in sporting clubs, events and competitions, which in turn is helping pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and improve their performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, whilst being very supportive, hold senior leaders stringently to account. They have a very good understanding of pupils' achievement and the effectiveness of the leadership of teaching.
 - Governors ask informed and searching questions to check that pupils benefit from any new developments or purchases. For example, they carefully follow up the impact of pupil premium funding, and played a key role in the reorganisation of the school.
 - The school benefits from expertise on the governing body in areas such as finance, health and safety, safeguarding, human resources, as well as the strong links it brings with the local community. Governors also audit and review their skills and look to expand their skill base in a particular area of expertise, through additional training, for example.
 - Governors ensure safeguarding procedures meet requirements and that they are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106629
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	425911

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vincent Scaife
Headteacher	Mike Reed
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2008
Telephone number	01226 711332
Fax number	01226 711332
Email address	brierley.primary@barnsley.org

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