

Barnfields Primary School

Lansdowne Way, Wildwood, Stafford, ST17 4RD

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school successfully builds on the excellent start children make in Nursery and Reception. Progress is good throughout Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Reading is a particular strength.
- Currently, pupils are achieving well. Year 6 pupils are on track to leave the school with standards in English and mathematics that are high, and much better than those achieved last year.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Activities are usually interesting and challenging. Teaching assistants know the pupils they work with well, and do a good job in helping them make progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are excellent.
- Pupils feel very safe and happy at school. Their attendance is above average.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have successfully improved teaching and achievement in Key Stage 2, following a dip in results last year.
- The wide range of subjects and other activities routinely offered to pupils contribute very well to pupils' personal skills as well as enriching their overall learning.
- Links with parents are very strong. The school has their confidence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently set work that demands enough of all pupils.
- Marking of pupils' written work and checks made during lessons are not always sufficiently precise to help pupils to do better.
- Some pupils do not spell or use grammar well enough.
- The checks made by senior and subject leaders do not focus enough on the progress different groups of pupils make in lessons and in their written work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons or parts of lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the senior leaders. Inspectors also reviewed a sample of pupils' written work with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a randomly selected group of pupils, the Chair and another member of the Governing Body, as well as senior and other leaders. The lead inspector talked to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's progress data for current pupils, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 93 parents and carers through their responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- Inspectors also considered responses to a staff questionnaire returned by 24 staff.

Inspection team

Krishan Sharma, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Judith Tulloch

Additional Inspector

Jenny Edginton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- There is a part-time nursery for mornings only. There is another pre-school nursery class, as well as before- and after-school clubs, on the school site, but these facilities are not managed by the governing body and were not part of this inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support pupils who are known to be or have been eligible for free school meals, and those cared for by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small minority are from a range of minority ethnic groups, a few of whom speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in Year 6.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education and has provided support to a school causing concern within the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers consistently:
 - set pupils work in lessons at the right level of difficulty, particularly for pupils of average ability
 - give pupils precise feedback and guidance in marking and in lessons, and ensure that pupils act upon this in their subsequent work
 - focus effectively on improving pupils' grammar and spelling skills.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels monitor more sharply the impact teaching is having on the progress made by all groups of pupils, both when they watch lessons and in their checks on written work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is currently good. The picture of progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is now much better than that shown in the school's Year 6 results last year.
- Children in Nursery and Reception develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills extremely well. On entry to Nursery, their attainment is at levels that are typical for their age. By the end of Reception, children are very well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- As a result of the consistently good progress pupils make during Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been above average over many years. The picture is more mixed in Key Stage 2. In 2013, the school's Year 6 results dipped seriously because a few pupils of average or higher ability underachieved. The school's data and inspection evidence show that in the current Year 6, pupils are on track to reach much higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is a particular strength in the school. Pupils learn phonics (the sounds that letters make) effectively. In 2013, at the end of Year 1, a higher proportion than nationally achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Pupils read widely and find reading enjoyable.
- Pupils' progress in all aspects of mathematics is good. Most pupils can calculate correctly and are confident in talking about the method they used. The use of mathematical skills to solve practical and real-life problems is getting stronger across the school.
- Progress in writing is strong for most pupils. The samples of work seen during the inspection show that pupils write for a wide range of reasons and with increasing technical accuracy. However, some pupils display an insecure grasp of the correct use of grammar or accuracy in spelling.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. The extra help they receive is carefully planned to improve their basic skills.
- The most able pupils are now making rapid progress. As a result, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels across the school is increasing. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are achieving well. A few of the average-ability pupils still make slower progress than others.
- In the 2013 national results, the attainment of Year 6 pupils eligible for pupil premium funding was similar to that of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics, and their progress was better than others in the school. Senior leaders are working effectively to close the attainment gap between eligible pupils across the school and their classmates, by systematically tracking their progress and providing extra help in one-to-one or small group activities to boost their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically, teaching is engaging and promotes pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their personal skills, helping them to relate to other pupils and adults with ease.
- Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes provide an extensive range of activities that capture

children's interest. They are extremely effective in encouraging children to try their ideas and to talk about them.

- When teaching is at its most effective, teachers are persistent in their questioning to stretch pupils' understanding, create a high level of interest and instil a love of learning. Activities are demanding for all groups. As a result different groups, including the most-able pupils, make the best possible progress. Occasionally, in some other lessons, pupils of average ability find the work given to them either too easy or too hard, which means a few of them do not make the progress they should.
- The teaching assistants get to know pupils they regularly work with, individually and in groups, well. Most pupils benefit from the tailored support they receive and make progress as quickly as others.
- Marking is regular and usually thoughtful. In the best examples, the guidance given to pupils is specific to what they set out to learn and helps them to improve their work. Some of the marking is too general and in a few cases pupils continue to repeat mistakes already corrected. Spoken comments made by teachers during lessons are encouraging and mostly point the way forward for pupils. On occasions, this feedback is also too general, so is not effective in moving pupils on towards what they were meant to achieve.
- The systematic teaching of phonics contributes effectively to pupils' achievement in reading. Teachers ensure that pupils write for a range of reasons and across different subjects. The samples of written work seen during the inspection show that pupils' spelling and use of grammar are sometimes weaker than other aspects of writing and teachers do not always focus closely enough on these aspects. The teaching of mathematics is improving pupils' understanding because teachers expect pupils to explain what they are doing.
- The extra help for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and for those supported by the pupil premium, is carefully planned and helps most of these pupils to progress as well as others. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language do well because teachers respond effectively to their specific needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Parents, staff and pupils speak approvingly of the standards of behaviour at the school. The management of behaviour is highly consistent and reassuring for pupils. Relationships between pupils and with adults are harmonious and contribute to the pleasant learning environment.
- Attitudes to learning are very positive across the school. Work is very well presented, with neat handwriting, showing pupils' pride in what they do. They keep the classrooms tidy, and move between different activities very sensibly.
- Pupils conduct themselves extremely well away from the classroom and treat each other very responsibly.
- Children's behaviour in the Nursery and Reception classes is excellent. Children relate extremely well to each other and adults. They love learning and their enjoyment is palpable.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is excellent. Parents and pupils alike agree that the school is a very safe place for them. Parents acknowledge that the school takes very good

care of their children. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare, and is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms bullying can take, such as name-calling and the misuse of the internet.

- Attendance is above average. Senior leaders and the governing body remain determined to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have been effective in securing pupils' good achievement and the quality of teaching. As a result, the school has recovered from the dip in the end of Year 6 results in 2013 and senior leaders have demonstrated the capacity to bring about further improvement. The school's current priorities for improvement are well chosen to support its future development.
- The school's tracking of pupils' progress is effective. Senior leaders and governors use this data to review the performance of different groups of pupils to ensure that all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Progress data are routinely reviewed and extra help is allocated for pupils for whom pupil premium provides support, and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The support provided is working, as the school's current data show that pupils eligible for the pupil premium are achieving almost as well as others.
- Senior and middle leaders, such as those with responsibility for subjects, regularly make a range of checks on the quality of teaching. Leaders' observations of teaching in lessons and reviews of pupils' written work identify many effective features. However, middle leaders' skills vary and not all focus sharply on the progress different groups of pupils make and how some of them could be helped to make more rapid progress. As a result, priorities identified to improve teaching across the school are not always precise.
- Arrangements for the management of teachers' performance fully recognise the need to link their pay increases to effectiveness in the classroom. Staff are given training that is suitably relevant to their individual performance targets and the school's priorities for improvement.
- The new additional sports funding is used well. Working with specialist coaches has improved the quality of the teaching of physical education. The wider range of activities has increased pupils' participation in physical activity and has improved their physical fitness. Pupils now compete in a greater number of competitive events locally.
- The range of subjects taught and other activities contribute well to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. Enrichment activities, such as educational and residential visits, international links, celebration of culturally diverse events and numerous extra activities, all promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Links with parents are strong and are well appreciated by parents and carers. They have confidence in the school and would readily recommend it to others.
- The local authority maintains regular links with the school. Its monitoring visits have been worthwhile in strengthening leadership and management, including governance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well, including its strengths and relative weaknesses. They look at pupils' performance data and how well the school fares against the national picture. They were aware of the dip in the school's 2013 results at the end of Year 6. Governors discussed

the possible causes and challenged the senior leaders to ensure that this dip does not become a trend. Their regular visits to school have assured them that it has not. The governing body has a good understanding of the quality of teaching. It maintains an overview of the use of the pupil premium and primary school sports funding and how it is making a difference to pupils' achievement and physical well-being. The performance management of teachers is designed to establish clear links between their performance in the classroom and pay increases. The governing body ensures that the safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.

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	124167
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	444121

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	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Stocking
Headteacher	Gillian Richards
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2010
Telephone number	01785 356356
Fax number	01785 356360
Email address	headteacher@barnfields.staffs.sch.uk

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