

Barrow Hill Primary Academy

Station Road, Barrow Hill, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 2PG

Inspection dates

5 to 6 March 2019

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- There have been significant changes in leadership and governance over the last year. The school has not improved as rapidly as it could.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good in all year groups. Some teachers do not assess when pupils need help quickly enough. Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The checks that middle leaders make do not bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Middle leaders do not take enough account of the progress that pupils make.
- Sometimes, teachers do not use questioning skills as well as they could to check and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Pupils' progress in phonics is not as rapid as it could be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills.
- Those responsible for governance are not as effective as they should be in holding leaders to account, including for the use of the pupil premium.
- Some teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is not as accurate as it could be. Teachers sometimes do not provide work that is challenging enough.
- Children's progress in the early years is inconsistent. Leaders do not check children's progress carefully enough to identify those who may be falling behind.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, and the trust, know the school well. They are bringing about improvements in the areas in which they have focused.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Many pupils progress well in writing.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are a strength of the school. Relationships are positive. Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in reading and mathematics by making sure that all teachers:
 - check pupils' learning carefully to ensure that work is challenging and adapt their teaching when appropriate
 - ask questions that encourage pupils to think carefully and deepen their understanding
 - accurately assess what pupils can achieve and identify the next steps in their learning
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their phonics skills.
- Strengthen leadership by ensuring that:
 - the trust swiftly implements its plans for developing leadership roles
 - those responsible for governance routinely check on all aspects of the work of the school and hold leaders to account, including for the impact of the pupil premium
 - the work of middle leaders, including in the early years, is more effective in improving pupils' progress and raising their attainment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There have been significant changes in senior leadership and governance roles over the last year. This turbulence has slowed the rate at which the school has improved.
- Senior leaders are bringing about improvements in teaching. They review teaching and learning carefully. They ensure teachers have opportunities to share practice and work alongside each other. However, the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Pupils' progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, is inconsistent.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what needs to improve. Some progress has been made in addressing the areas they have identified. For example, they have ensured that pupils' attainment and progress in writing are improving. Leaders and other staff are working to improve the accuracy and use of assessment. However, their work is not yet securely established.
- Assessments of pupils' learning have not been consistently accurate or used as well as they could be. Leaders have recognised this and have begun to make improvements. However, some inconsistencies still exist.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about their areas of responsibility. They make some checks of the quality of teaching and learning. However, these checks do not focus on the progress that pupils make. They do not result in sustained improvements to the quality of education that pupils receive in these areas of responsibility.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the use of the pupil premium. Leaders have used the funding to appoint additional staff, introduce new teaching programmes and to provide pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders do not check carefully enough the impact of the funding. Some disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as they could, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used well to ensure that pupils are fully included in the school's activities. Leaders ensure that pupils receive targeted support that is matched well to their needs. Pupils with SEND are making improving progress from their starting points. However, leaders are not as sharp as they could be in evaluating the progress that these pupils make so they can be sure that the funding has the maximum impact.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively. This has resulted in an increase in pupil participation in sports. Pupils enjoy attending clubs and sporting activities available to them. The school's spending on additional swimming lessons has resulted in the majority of pupils who left the school last year able to swim at least 25 metres using a range of different strokes.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school. They say that communications are effective and there is always a member of staff available to talk to them. Illustrating this, one parent's comments, typical of many, were, 'The staff know all of the children really well. My child loves coming to school.'
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It allows pupils to learn about different people from different places and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils

described their work on Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and their topic on fair trade as memorable.

- Staff are unanimous in their view that they are proud to work at the school. They say that leaders provide them with suitable training, treat them with respect and support them in their work. They enjoy working at the school.

Governance of the school

- There have been significant changes to governance over the last year. Those responsible for governance are increasingly ambitious and aspirational. However, they are not as effective as they could be in holding leaders to account, including for the impact of the pupil premium.
- Those responsible for governance have put into place a comprehensive programme of checks to make sure that the school is meeting its statutory responsibilities.
- The trust is providing support and expertise to bring around improvements. The support from the trust is focused on developing a robust leadership structure, including developing the effectiveness of the local governing body.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is effective. Records are detailed and fit for purpose. The checks that leaders make on people employed by the school are thorough and comprehensive.
- Staff have a secure understanding of the school's safeguarding policy and raise any concerns quickly with the school's safeguarding leads. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to keep safe any pupils who are at risk of harm.
- The school's learning mentor has a positive working relationship with families. Valuable support and advice ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly. Parents speak positively about the support they receive.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They understand the risks when online and know what to do if they have a concern. They know how to stay safe from strangers, from fire, and from the dangers of playing in areas that may be unsafe.
- Leaders make regular checks on how effective their safeguarding procedures are in order to ensure they are doing everything they should to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is improving but is not consistently good.
- Teachers do not consistently check how well pupils are getting on in lessons. Sometimes, pupils do not understand how they should do the work that teachers set for them. Teachers are sometimes not effective in seeing when pupils are finding work too easy or too hard, and in making changes to provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge. Some pupils, including the most able, are not consistently challenged across all year groups.
- Some staff do not use questioning skilfully enough to check or deepen pupils'

understanding. Too often, pupils are asked questions that are too easy for them, which results in them losing interest.

- The assessments that some staff make of pupils' learning are not consistently accurate. Information about pupils' learning is sometimes not used well enough to inform the next steps in learning. Sometimes, work is not matched well to pupils' abilities.
- There is a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Pupils are able to match different letter combinations to the sounds that they make. They use this to help them read new words. However, staff do not consistently ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise and apply their phonics knowledge and skills.
- When teaching is strong, pupils are clear about what they are expected to do in each part of the lesson, and work is well matched to their ability. Teaching is engaging.
- Leaders and other staff ensure that the range of vocabulary pupils use is increasing. Pupils enjoy learning about new words each day and are beginning to use these in their work. In one class, pupils were learning about the Stone Age. They understood and were beginning to use the words Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic to describe different periods in the Stone Age.
- Teachers ensure that pupils can apply their learning in mathematics in different contexts. Pupils are beginning to think carefully about their learning and how to solve mathematical problems.
- Leaders have improved the way that reading is taught. This has resulted in pupils improved understanding of how texts are structured. They apply this knowledge in their written work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The positive relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are a strength of the school. The school is a happy place.
- Pupils describe the school as inclusive and say that everyone is treated fairly. Older pupils understand protected characteristics and explain that everyone is welcome in their school regardless of where they come from or what they believe. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils know how to stay healthy. They know the importance of a balanced diet and make sure that the snacks available from the school's tuck shop are carefully controlled. Pupils who run the tuck shop explained to me that they only serve snacks up to a maximum of 100 calories. Pupils have a good understanding of food hygiene and safety.
- Pupils value the work of the school council. They talk with pride about the positive difference that the council has made to the resources that are available to them on the playground. Pupils know that they can make a positive contribution to their school because the school council will support them by passing their ideas to the school's leaders. Similarly, they are proud of the way in which the head boy and head girl

represent the school.

- Pupils play an active role in running the popular breakfast club that is open to pupils and their parents. They help serve food and make sure that the service runs smoothly.
- Pupils say bullying is rare, and this matches leaders' records. Pupils are confident that leaders will address any concerns should they arise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and give a warm welcome to visitors. They hold doors open for adults and regularly say please and thank you to adults and each other.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' attendance. Meetings are arranged with parents to explore reasons for high absence. They set targets and agree actions. All of these meetings were attended in the autumn term. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in attendance.
- Pupils value the rewards that are available to them in school. They enjoy looking after 'Attendance Ted', which they receive for class attendance. They enjoy collecting rewards and saving them up to spend in the school's Reward Shop at the end of each week.
- Leaders provide effective support for pupils who experience difficulties with behaviour. All staff manage pupils' behaviour well, using a consistent approach. The previously high levels of exclusions have reduced.
- The learning mentor provides invaluable support for pupils and their families. Case studies show that her work has resulted in increased attendance, punctuality and improved behaviour for individual pupils.
- In some lessons, pupils lose focus when the work that they are given does not challenge them.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 in 2018 reading and mathematics was lower than that of pupils nationally. Work in pupils' books shows that current pupils are beginning to make better progress. However, too many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, still do not make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils working at the levels expected for their age is too variable across the school. In some year groups, only a small number of pupils have reached where they should be in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Senior leaders ensure that targeted support is in place for these pupils, and this is helping them to catch up.
- The most able pupils do not consistently make the progress that they are capable of. Some teachers set pupils work that is too easy for them. At other times, pupils are not moved on quickly enough to more complex work.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics

screening check was below the national average in 2018. Pupils' progress in phonics is not as strong as it could be because they do not practise and apply their phonics skills as well as they could.

- In 2018, the proportions of pupils in key stage 1 reaching the standards expected for their age were higher than those found nationally for reading, writing and mathematics. Work in current books shows that they continue to achieve well in key stage 1.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are making stronger progress in writing. They are producing longer and more sustained pieces of writing. The proportion of pupils who attained the standards expected of them for writing in 2018 was above the national average.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children join the early years with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age. The proportions of children who achieved a good level of development have been below the national averages for the last two years.
- Leaders ensure that all adults know and understand their roles. However, their view of the overall effectiveness of the early years is overly positive. Leaders and staff in the early years do not effectively evaluate the progress that children make. Children who are falling behind are not identified quickly enough.
- Teaching requires improvement. Staff are sometimes not skilful enough in questioning children. They do not ask questions that require children to think independently or to deepen their understanding. Often, children are expected to give an answer too quickly and are not given the chance to think about their answers. In some cases, staff move on to the next point before children have given an answer. Staff do not assess children's learning thoroughly enough to be able to accurately plan for their next steps.
- An electronic system where parents can view and add to the assessments of what their child can do has recently been introduced. However, this is still in its infancy and only a small number of parents have engaged.
- Children behave well in the early years and enjoy spending time at school. They are provided with a wide range of activities and they play cooperatively.
- Leaders ensure that good use is made of the outdoor area. Staff ensure that it is vibrant and well-resourced. Children are able to access the same range of learning activities both indoors and outside.
- Children are taught how to look after themselves. During the inspection, one group of children was taught how to brush their teeth. This activity was linked well to their work in mathematics and gave them the opportunity to recite numbers while counting the number of teeth they had to brush.
- Staff in the early years have a good understanding of children's needs as they start nursery. The 'play together' sessions that the school offers for families are well attended. Parents value the visits and say that their children get used to being in school before starting nursery.
- Relationships between staff and parents are positive and communication is effective.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. The environment is safe, and staff ensure

that the welfare requirements are met.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 143179 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 10087397 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 85 |
| Appropriate authority | The board of trustees |
| Chair | Barbara Walsh |
| Acting Headteacher | Benjamin Wray |
| Telephone number | 01246 472 494 |
| Website | www.barrowhill.academy |
| Email address | headteacher@barrowhill.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- This is the first inspection since the school opened as an academy in September 2016. When its predecessor school, Barrow Hill Primary School, was inspected in May 2014, it was judged to be good.
- The school is part of the Cavendish Learning Trust.
- The acting headteacher and acting senior teacher were appointed in November 2017.
- The school is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of white British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than that found nationally. No pupils are

supported by an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning across all classes with the acting headteacher and/or the acting senior teacher. Eight lessons were observed.
- The inspector held meetings with the acting headteacher, the acting senior teacher, the chair of the local governing body, middle leaders and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector examined pupils' work, information regarding their attainment and progress and the school's records of behaviour and safety.
- The inspector also examined minutes of the meetings of the governing body, safeguarding documents, including the mandatory checks made on the recruitment of new staff, and a scrutiny of the school's website.
- Discussions were held with pupils, and the inspector listened to pupils read in their classes.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the parents' or pupils' surveys to consider. The inspector spoke informally with parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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