



Barnham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125892
Local Authority West Sussex
Inspection number 293395
Inspection dates 6–7 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Collard

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Elm Grove
School category	Community		Barnham
Age range of pupils	4–11		Bognor Regis PO22 0HW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01243 552197
Number on roll (school)	292	Fax number	01243 554588
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Pat Dingemams
		Headteacher	J Hodgson
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Barnham is an average-sized primary school serving both the local, rural town and outlying villages. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and all communicate effectively in English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average but because of the special unit for pupils with physical disabilities known as 'The Orchard', there is a much higher proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need than in most schools. The high reputation of the school has meant that nearly half the pupils have joined partway through their schooling.

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 with significant strengths in the quality of education it provides. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and an excellent and vibrant curriculum. The highly effective care, guidance and support for pupils are the reasons why their personal development is outstanding. Pupils behave impeccably. They are charming, polite and interesting communicators. The success of the very strong support systems can clearly be seen in the way pupils and adults relate so well to one another. The excellent leadership and management team have made sure that the correct priorities have been drawn from the school's good self-evaluation. The school is clear about its strengths and has shown that it is able to remedy weaknesses. Improvements in systems for assessment, in individual target setting for pupils and the present good standards show a good capacity to fulfil the school's aspiration to become 'one of the best'.

Children's attainment when they start school varies from year to year but is usually broadly average. A significant factor is the high number of pupils entering or leaving the school, which affects the varying profile in each class. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. The school has carefully balanced the correct priorities to improve both pupils' personal and academic success year on year. In English, for instance, the developments in the teaching of reading and writing have had a significant impact on raising standards. Consequently, there has been an improvement in national test results at age 11. The measures of progress from Year 2 for the pupils who took the tests in 2006 place the school in the top 10% across the country. Achievement in mathematics, particularly for the higher attainers, is more variable. The lessons learnt through improving pupils' achievement in English, such as the development of applying and using previous skills, are now being used to improve the teaching in mathematics and pupils are now making more consistent progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and particularly those with physical disabilities make outstanding progress, with some reaching above-average standards by the time they leave.

The headteacher's drive and dynamism have created a cohesive team involving parents, governors and pupils. She has also inspired staff to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and has resolved the relatively weaker provision in Years 1 and 2 which was identified at the last inspection. The school effectively uses its extensive data about pupils' performance to track individuals' progress. However, it is not used sufficiently well to identify reasons for trends in the performance, such as in mathematics, or to check the impact of improvement measures.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use information about whole-school performance to check that initiatives to improve pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, are having the desired impact.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have been improving over recent years and are now above average, as reflected in the results for Year 6 pupils in 2006. Overall, standards are higher in English and science than in mathematics. As the school has rightly identified, pupils' progress in mathematics lags behind other areas in most year groups. Most children start in Reception with broadly average standards. Good progress means that most children start Year 1 having achieved the targets set for their age and having made significant progress in personal, social, emotional, physical and creative development. Standards for pupils presently in Year 2 are at average levels but assessments show they have made good gains in literacy skills. National test results for those in Year 2 in 2006 were not as high, but this was because the group came from a lower starting point. Progress between Year 2 and 6 has been good for three years and was at its highest in 2006 in English. Assessment data confirms the excellent progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils' work shows above-average standards in most other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They overwhelmingly enjoy being at school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are very positive, thereby preparing them well for when they move to another school. Behaviour is first rate. Pupils co-operate well with one another and respond really well to the challenges of an exciting curriculum. Pupils feel very safe in school. They have responded warmly to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles, which has been recognised by the national Healthy Schools award. For instance, many test and taste vegetables that they grow in the school's own gardens. These types of activities, along with the development of basic skills, ensure that pupils' future well-being has an excellent grounding. Pupils' sense of responsibility develops well through their contributions to the community: for example, through choirs, the 'walk to school week' and their involvement with the Parish Council. Pupils are well prepared for their future life. Pupils make the most of opportunities to work with other adults and children both at home and, through penpal links and exchanges, with other schools abroad.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good across the school. In the Early Years classes, the learning environment is stimulating. There is a good range of activities to engage children and ensure that they make good progress across all areas of learning. Common strengths in the effective

teaching are the good relationships and well-planned lessons that ensure work is matched well to pupils' learning needs. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and want to do their very best. The level of support for those with learning difficulties or disabilities is particularly effective and results in outstanding achievement for these groups. Teachers provide highly interesting activities and use resources well to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, in a role play about 'Jack and the Beanstalk', one teacher dressed as the gardener to lend authenticity to the planting of beans and another took the part of the giant. Pupils really enjoyed this and agreed that 'teachers make learning fun'. Teachers mark work well and involve pupils in assessing how well they have done. This usually helps pupils to have a clear idea of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to get better. Just occasionally, the quality of this guidance is weaker and then pupils are not clear about their tasks, which slows progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The highly innovative curriculum has been developed to motivate and stimulate pupils' learning. As one pupil said, 'I don't know how to fit it all in.' Displays bear witness to the very many different subject activities that ensure pupils' progress is good across many subjects. These range from a study in history of the colours that the Romans used in their mosaics, to designing and building moving fairground rides using computers and other technology. Pupils are being well prepared for their future life and for how to take charge of their own learning through homework and independent activities. Pupils enjoy the way in which subjects link together so that they can use their skills to support learning in different situations. The extra-curricular activities are extremely numerous and wide ranging and many pupils take part. Pupils and staff are proud of being involved in a television programme about their 'Grow it – Eat it' campaign in conjunction with the Royal Horticultural Society, the Hamlyn Trust and the Department for Education and Skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding, reflecting the exemplary commitment of staff to pupils' well-being. The procedures in place are successful in promoting pupils' health and safety. The good academic guidance given to pupils has greatly improved and is a key reason for the improvement in individual achievement. Pupils are involved in helping to set their own targets, with teachers guiding these as a result of the good knowledge they have of pupils' needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make excellent progress because teachers are well informed about the very specific needs of each individual. The school works very well with parents and other agencies by providing relevant information that will help parents fully support their children's work. Pupils flourish whilst at the school, recognising the good quality of the education being provided. As one pupil said, 'I would not change anything, not one scrap of paint'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding because of the high quality learning environment that is being developed. The headteacher has been the driving force behind the reforms and provides an extremely clear vision for the school. Senior staff support teachers well to help improve their expertise and governors provide the necessary support and challenge. As a result, all staff are highly motivated, pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning, achieve well and become increasingly mature, well behaved and responsible. The school has won many awards, including the recent excellent travel plan that exemplifies the school's values of shared participation between pupils, staff, parents and governors. The school's accurate self-evaluation recognises that before it can judge itself to be outstanding, its many improvements need time to be embedded. Its new development plan is therefore aimed at using assessment data more effectively to establish the reasons for fluctuations in standards such as those in mathematics.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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	1

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 behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	1
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

Thank you for looking after us so well during our recent visit. We enjoyed hearing about all the exciting things you do and seeing you working hard during your lessons. As I promised some of you, I am writing to summarise the main points of our report.

- You told us how proud you were of your school and we could see why. We think it is a good school with some really excellent aspects. This is also what almost all of your parents and carers said. For instance, you are taught well, make good progress and the standards you reach by the time you leave in Year 6 are above average. You may not know, but in last year's tests the children had the highest results for three years. So those of you in Year 6 have a lot to live up to!
- You told us you were looked after extremely well and we agree. We saw how well this happened when we were in your classes.
- You clearly enjoy school and look after each other very well. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour. When we walked round the school many of you were concentrating so hard we could hear a pin drop.
- We have said that the activities you do are outstanding. There are so many in so many subjects that we could not list them all in the report. It is good that the high quality displays make sure that visitors can see everything you have done.
- Your excellent headteacher and her staff know what to do to make sure you are prepared for your next school. They are continuing to find new ways to make things even better. We have suggested that they need to now take all the assessment data they have about your work and see if there are any different rates of progress for any of you, particularly in mathematics. This will help them to provide the right level of support quickly.

Finally, we would like to wish you all the best for the future. Make sure you keep working hard and helping your teachers as much as you do now.