

Barnes Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102902
Local Authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	308157
Inspection date	10 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Milton

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 on roll	
School	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Johnathan Chapman
Headteacher	Mr Mark Hartley
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
School address	Cross Street Barnes London SW13 0QQ
Telephone number	020 8876 7358
Fax number	070 9201 6306

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the standards and progress of the current pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 2 and 6; the quality of teaching and learning; and the effectiveness of leadership and management in raising standards for three specific groups of pupils. Evidence was gathered from observing lessons and an assembly, scrutinising school documentation, pupils' work and questionnaires completed by parents, as well as discussions with pupils, governors, staff and the headteacher.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but evidence confirmed the accuracy of the school's own assessments as given in its self-evaluation. Such assessments have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Barnes Primary is larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below the national average. About half of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and about a quarter each are from Europe and a wide range of other minority ethnic groups. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and small numbers of pupils join the school with little or no English. The proportion of pupils with learning, behavioural and communication difficulties is broadly average with some pupils facing severe difficulties. An above-average proportion of pupils have statements of special education need. The school has received several awards: the Artsmark Gold, Activemark Gold, Healthy Schools Award, Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and the London Schools' Environmental Award. It is a Designated Extended School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Barnes Primary provides an outstanding education for all of its pupils. The school has made excellent improvements since the last inspection because of the headteacher's outstanding leadership together with the sustained, highly committed support of all staff. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the school. One wrote, 'An excellent school - positive, encouraging, exciting - a great beginning to my children's learning journey'. Another rightly characterised the school as having 'colour, energy, imagination!'

The headteacher was appointed at the start of 2006. He leads by example in all aspects of the school's life and is, in the words of a governor, 'a consummate professional.' For example, he provides high quality staff guides for particular aspects of teaching such as writing and spelling. Parents appreciate all that he does for the school and two wrote, 'We are immensely impressed by the dynamic, approachable, proactive and inspiring headteacher who understands individual pupils and parents.' The school places an emphasis on 'learning, love and laughter' and these underpin the wide range of improvements that the school has made in the last two years.

Pupils' knowledge and skills on joining the school were broadly those expected for their ages but these have increased in the last two years. Standards have risen across the school in the last two years. For this year and last, children made good progress during the Foundation Stage and have achieved standards above those expected by the time they leave the Reception classes. During Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make outstanding progress during Key Stage 2 and Year 6 pupils reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. Across the school, pupils make exemplary progress in writing because of very effective teaching based on excellent staff training. Pupils all take great care and pride in the presentation of work. They excel at art, music and physical education and, for example, there are high quality displays of pupils' art work in a wide range of media all around the school.

All groups of pupils make similar good or outstanding progress, including those with severe learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language. An excellent aspect of the school's work is that it analyses the progress of individual pupils and particular groups, such as the more able and those that face learning difficulties. It then takes very well planned, effective action to remedy any underachievement quickly.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They really enjoy many activities including the very wide range of activities available during sports week. All pupils are involved in the very popular house competitions. They feel extremely safe at school, they play and work exceptionally well together, and think about what is important in life. Their behaviour is excellent and they are keen to learn. Pupils are very well prepared for later life because they have excellent attitudes, social skills and key skills of literacy and numeracy as well as learning a great deal during Young Enterprise Day with staff from an insurance company. Many live healthy lifestyles.

The school has excellent strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning which is outstanding. Pupils enjoy lessons and a parent wrote, 'Teachers do a great job at making learning fun.' Teachers make excellent use of the interactive white boards. Work is usually challenging and well matched to pupils' differing learning needs. Lessons include a variety of tasks that actively involve all pupils in learning and no time is wasted. The well qualified teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning in lessons, small groups and one-to-one

support. Marking and target setting are used consistently well to help pupils know how to improve their work.

The excellent curriculum is planned imaginatively and coherently, and includes an exceptional range of enrichment including a residential course for Year 6 pupils. There is excellent provision for gifted and higher-attaining pupils and those facing learning difficulties, enabling them all to make very good progress. Pupils achieve good standards in using information and communication technology (ICT), and the school has plans to further develop the provision of computers as the staff recognise that pupils could make greater use of ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects. All adults work hard to provide excellent levels of care and support, especially for vulnerable pupils. Many parents wrote that the staff provide a safe, understanding, supportive and caring environment and that there is a sharp focus on the learning and personal needs of each child. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and meet requirements.

The school takes effective steps to ensure that all pupils learn a great deal and have full access to all of the activities it provides, including the excellent range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, and that all parents are involved in their children's education. It has an outstanding capacity for further improvement because it knows its strengths and weaknesses accurately, has a relentless drive to provide pupils with the very best possible education, and it involves all staff in very well thought out plans to remedy any weaknesses. The very well informed, active governing body challenges and supports the school very effectively.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

In the last few years, children's attainment on entry to the school has risen and is now higher than the expectations for their ages. There have been good improvements to provision in the Foundation Stage this year including the excellent outdoor play and learning areas, the good range of motivating learning activities and the language-rich learning environment. The curriculum is good, and children's learning is planned around stimulating themes. Parent helpers have good guidance about helping children to learn through their activities. As a result of these improvements and good teaching, children make good progress with their learning although they have insufficient opportunities for solving numeracy problems. There are accurate assessments of children's progress and this information is used to plan activities that meet children's learning needs. As a result of the improving rates of progress, children's standards are now above those expected by the time they enter Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the ICT development plan to raise standards and to improve resources so that all pupils make more regular use of computers to enhance their learning in all subjects.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

23 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barnes Primary School, London, SW13 0QQ

I really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting Mr Hartley, two governors and the staff and seeing many of you in lessons. I enjoyed talking to you in meetings with Years 3, 4 and 6. I am very grateful to so many of your parents for returning the questionnaires. It was interesting to hear from you that you really enjoy school and particularly like the teachers, the many different activities and the friendship. I wish I had been at the lesson when you used triangular prisms of chocolate to show where mountains were on a map. It was very good to see how much Years 1 and 2 were involved in their assembly about getting lost, and I enjoyed seeing a boy take the role of Mr Hartley's father.

Yours is an outstanding school. You learn a great deal because the teaching is excellent, and teachers' marking and target setting help you know how to improve, and your parents give you plenty of support. If for some reason you are not learning as much as you should, the school is really good at helping you to catch up. Your standards in English, mathematics and science are very high. I was very impressed by the quality of your writing. You also do very well in art, music and physical education. You achieve well in information and communication technology, and the school has plans to increase the number of computers so that you can make even more use of computers as part of normal lessons. You might come up with some good ideas to help Mr Hartley, the staff and governors to achieve this.

The school is excellent at helping you develop as people, and you all take pride in your work, behave exceptionally well and are extremely keen to learn. The staff work very hard to provide interesting things for you to learn both in normal lessons and from visitors and visits, special weeks and clubs. All adults take a great deal of care of all of you. Mr Hartley and the staff want you to have the best possible education at Barnes Primary. They are brilliant at identifying those things that are not as good as they want them to be and then improving them.

Keep up the excellent work!

Yours sincerely

Mike Milton

Lead Inspector