

Barnabas Oley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110814
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	325230
Inspection date	15 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	160
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Beech
Headteacher	Mrs C Caldwell
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Middle Street Great Gransden Sandy Bedfordshire SG19 3AE

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	15 September 2008
Inspection number	325230

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Age group	4-11
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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: pupils' achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the previous Ofsted report, and the school's records of progress over time. A range of school documents, particularly assessment data and the questionnaires returned by parents, were scrutinised. The inspector looked at parts of lessons, and met staff, pupils and the chair of governors.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector discussed at length the school's own assessments, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school serves the villages of Great Gransden, Little Gransden and Waresley. Although many of the children live locally, an increasing number are drawn from further afield. Almost all the pupils are of white British heritage and all except one have English as their first language. Attainment on entry is above national expectations. The proportion of children entitled to a free school meal and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

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 that provides good value for money. It has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to maintain this momentum. Standards remain consistently high because the quality of teaching and learning is good and the school benefits from dedicated leadership from the headteacher who is nurturing teamwork. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'The new headteacher has impressed us with her leadership, common sense and strong management approach'. The school has the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools, particularly in developing the curriculum and providing for those pupils with learning difficulties.

Achievement is good and standards are high. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and reach standards that are often well above national expectations. The skills that the children acquire in the Reception class provide them with a secure footing for future learning in Key Stage 1 and very positive attitudes towards school. In Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are consistently high. This is because the teaching is good and careful use is made of assessment information to ensure that the work set is well matched to the pupils' needs. Standards in writing are not as strong and this remains the case throughout the school. Although pupils have a good range of vocabulary and a good understanding of grammar, some lack the motivation to express and develop their ideas in writing. However, overall standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are significantly above average year-on-year.

Pupils' personal development is good. Attendance rates are good and pupils arrive punctually. Pupils report that they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. However, although pupils are polite and courteous a small minority are boisterous, particularly at break times, and their conduct impacts adversely on others. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle because they benefit from whole school initiatives to promote good eating habits and regular participation in sport. Pupils value the care shown to them and feel increasingly involved in making decisions. They make a meaningful contribution to the school community in regular meetings of the school council. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of their own rural traditions and a growing awareness of cultural diversity in contemporary society. By the time they leave, most pupils have acquired secure social and outstanding academic skills to assist their future economic well-being. They have a strong sense of their own responsibility to support others and a well-developed awareness of global and environmental issues.

The quality of teaching is good. A common feature in all classes is the warmth of the relationships and this motivates the pupils to work hard and remain on task. Teachers plan well together and introduce interesting topics to motivate the pupils. Because teachers are clear with their explanations and the work set is well matched to the range of ability in each class, pupils make good progress. However, there are missed opportunities for developing pupils' independent thinking skills and raising the level of challenge for the higher attaining pupils. This is managed successfully in the school's annual programme of 'themed weeks' but this excellent practice is not so evident in weekly lessons. Teachers are skilled in asking open-ended questions to gauge the pupils' level of understanding and pupils are keen to respond because they know that their answers will be valued. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together and provide pupils with a good level of feedback on their work. Interactive whiteboards are used successfully to demonstrate new techniques, although there are not enough opportunities for pupils to

develop their own ideas using computers. Furthermore, the use of homework to support learning is inconsistently set between classes.

The curriculum is structured effectively to support learning in the mixed-age classes. There is an appropriate focus on promoting skills in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum strongly supports the pupils' personal development with many valuable opportunities to promote their well-being. Key strengths of the good curriculum are the strong roots in the school's historical traditions and the links with the community, particularly the church, that enable pupils to develop a sense of their place in society. Music plays a key part in the life of the school and strongly supports the pupils' personal development. A further strength is the programme of well-chosen visits, visiting speakers and the range of activities beyond the school day that support pupils' personal development.

Pastoral support for pupils is good. Parents and pupils appreciate the efforts made to ensure that all feel safe, secure and valued. Procedures for health and safety and risk assessment are secure. Pupils are happy in school, but know there is always someone they can turn to if in difficulty. Recent strategies to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes, such as the introduction of 'Golden Time', have been effective and contribute significantly to pupils' good personal development. Assessment systems are good. There are good procedures to track pupils' progress, and data is being used increasingly to match work to pupils' differing abilities. However, there remains scope to extend these procedures so that pupils are better informed about their personal targets and are enabled to take more responsibility for their learning, particularly the higher attaining pupils.

Leadership and management of the school are good. Although the school's self evaluation documentation needs updating, the school's view of itself is broadly accurate and has resulted in a clear strategy for continuing improvement. The newly appointed headteacher has spent her two terms productively, particularly in building relationships to secure the teamwork of the staff and a shared accountability for school performance. The headteacher has the confidence of most parents. Furthermore, assessment procedures have been refined and a more integrated curriculum, where links are made between subjects, has been introduced. The priorities detailed in the school improvement plan, based on a clear evaluation of its contribution to the broader community, are entirely appropriate. The quality of governance is good and governors have good skills and strategies to gauge the school's effectiveness and to measure its performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. This is because the school has forged good relationships with parents and is very successful in enabling the children to settle quickly into routines. The good ratio of adults to children and the warmth of the atmosphere ensures that the very youngest children feel secure, and all benefit from timely individual attention. The school places great emphasis on the development of the children's speaking and listening skills and promotes a love of books to encourage reading and writing. Children learn about number and shape through a range of practical activities. The quality of teaching is good. Learning is fun. Staff provide a good balance between directed activities and activities chosen by the children. However, although the curriculum is good, the quality of learning is limited by the lack of a secure, discrete outdoor area that is readily accessible by the children. This impacts adversely not only on children's physical development but also on the development of their

communication and creative skills. Nevertheless, most children attain above national expectations by the time they move into Year 1 from the careful nurturing they receive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the outdoor area as a learning facility for those children in the Reception class.
- Raise the achievement of the higher attaining pupils.

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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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barnabas Oley CofE Primary School, Great Gransden, SG19 3AE.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assembly, meet the school council and see you playing games outside. I can understand why you are proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- Your work is good and you achieve high standards.
- You have a good attitude towards your work and most of you behave very well.
- The school is very mindful of the need to keep you safe and happy.
- Your teachers work well to make sure you are kept busy.
- The school provides a wide range of activities to keep you interested.
- Mrs Caldwell is determined to make sure the school gets better and better.

You are very fortunate to be able to attend such a good school as Barnabas Oley. It is really important that you continue to work hard and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. I have found one or two matters that should help the school to become even better when they have been attended to. Firstly, the school needs to develop a suitable play area for the children in the Reception class so they have more opportunities to learn. Also, the school should find more ways to challenge you, especially those of you who find the work a little easy at times.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector