

# Barton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131866
<b>Local Authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	328652
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rowena Onions

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	461
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Northcott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Young
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Barton Hill Road Torquay TQ2 8JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01803 327161
<b>Fax number</b>	01803 322181

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Barton Primary is a larger than average school serving an area of Torquay. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and have English as their first language. A well above average percentage of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. A higher than average number transfer into and out of the school at times other than those expected. A well above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a high number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, including 10 who are placed in a unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties. These pupils travel to the school from a wide area of Torbay and South Devon. The unit caters for pupils up to the age of seven years. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage includes both Nursery and Reception classes. Most children in the Nursery attend part time. At the time of the inspection, five of the children in the speech and language unit were of reception age. Attainment on entry to the school is low.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Barton is a satisfactory school. It is, however, improving and many aspects of the school are good. The school is particularly effective in engaging pupils' interest and fostering in them a desire to learn. Diligent and focused work by the headteacher, senior managers and staff is successfully improving other aspects of the school. As a consequence, there is a steady rise in pupils' achievement. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is, however, not yet sufficiently consistent and, despite accelerated progress towards the end of the key stage, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is no more than satisfactory overall. They still leave the school with well below average standards because, although the oldest pupils are catching up, they have not closed all the gaps in their attainment. Because the provision for them is very well thought out and delivered, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils in the speech and language unit also make good progress.

Barton Primary School is a bright, lively and secure place where the development of pupils' personal and academic skills are given equal importance. Pupils know they are safe and valued and greatly appreciate this. Pupils' personal development is good, as a result of the good quality care, guidance and support given to individuals and the way the curriculum is designed to promote this. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, safe and well by, for example, enthusiastically joining in with the wide opportunities to exercise during and after the school day. A high level of respect is evident between adults and pupils and standards of behaviour are good.

The school has successfully redesigned its curriculum to promote pupils' interest and to provide them with more opportunities to practise the skills learned in one subject, in others. There is a good focus on basic skills in English and mathematics and the school has taken on many initiatives over the last three years to try to raise standards. Because these are more securely embedded in some classes than in others, their success in accelerating progress varies, particularly in Key Stage 2. The curriculum is broad. Artwork displayed throughout the school and the music heard during the inspection were of high quality. The school's international status shows its commitment to helping pupils to become good world as well as local citizens.

Although there is much good teaching in the school, there remains a variability that makes its impact satisfactory overall. This is caused in part by the variability in the embedding of new initiatives and in part because teachers' assessments and therefore expectations of the pupils are not always sufficiently accurate. Teachers are, however, skilled in managing and motivating pupils through their choice of activities and the range of methods used. Teaching assistants are well trained and contribute very positively to the progress pupils' make.

The school is well led and managed. Improvement work has ensured that there are no longer any pockets of underachievement in the school. The headteacher has built up a staff team who work very hard to promote higher standards. There is a clear track record of improvement and a determination evident amongst staff to continue this improvement, which means that the school has good capacity to improve. The great majority of parents hold the school in high regard. Their opinion is summed up by one parent's comment, 'The school has helped my child to grow and mature as a more rounded, tolerant person aware of his community.'

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Although most children do not reach the nationally expected goals by the end of the Reception Year, due to good teaching over Nursery and Reception, they make good progress in relation to their starting points. The teaching is well planned and lively, capturing children's interests and ensuring that individual needs are met. The good curriculum ensures all areas of learning are covered and staff rightly give high priority to the development of the children's language and personal development. Classrooms and outdoor areas are designed to stimulate interest. For the large majority of Early Years Foundation Stage children, very good use is made of learning outdoors. During the inspection, for example, much fun was had 'building' houses of straw in the snow! The balance between indoor and outdoor learning is not, however, as secure for the Early Years Foundation Stage children in the speech and language unit.

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a well judged balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children, enabling children to develop independence. There are a few occasions when children have chosen activities for themselves, where learning could be better promoted by some additional input from adults. Children benefit from high quality care, support and guidance. Their personal development is promoted very successfully. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Adults work well together and collectively strive to do their best for the children.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and the consistency of achievement, especially in Key Stage 2, by:
- ensuring that new initiatives are successfully embedded and having a good impact in all classes
- improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments to ensure that all pupils are accurately challenged in all lessons.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Over the last two years, pupils have made better progress throughout the school. At present this is having greater impact in the Early Years Foundation Stage and on standards in reading, writing and mathematics more in Year 2 than Year 6 because rates of progress are more consistent for the younger pupils. Thus by the end of Year 2, while standards are still below average, achievement has been good in relation to their low starting points on entry to the school. In Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are still affected by pupils' past underachievement in Years 3 and 4 and, even though their progress accelerated in Years 5 and 6, they have been unable to make up all the lost ground. Currently, no group of pupils is underachieving, but achievement still varies from satisfactory to good in Key Stage 2 with the better progress being made in Years 5 and 6. Intervention work with pupils who are not progressing adequately has ensured that groups of pupils, such as the small number of pupils with English as an additional language and those with particular emotional needs, progress as well as their peers. Because great emphasis has been placed on practical activity in science, pupils throughout the school achieve well in this subject.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is a happy and harmonious community. Relationships are positive; consequently pupils feel valued and secure. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Through provision, such as nurture and anger management groups, the small but significant number of pupils who have behavioural difficulties are helped to improve. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They respect each other's feelings and have a well developed sense of fair play. They respond positively when given responsibility, for example, as members of the active school council. They have a strong social awareness, understanding how they can contribute to the school and local community. They are developing an understanding of the wider world through eco work and through the links that are developing with schools in Italy, Turkey and Poland. Workplace skills such as the ability to cooperate and work hard are developing well. However, their current satisfactory achievement in English and mathematics means their preparation for the future is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is at least satisfactory in all classes and good in some. However, this variability causes its impact to be satisfactory overall. Good pupil management means that pupils can relax and enjoy lessons. Teachers give careful explanations at the beginning of lessons. Thus pupils know what they are expected to learn. Senior managers have already identified that teachers' detailed assessments of pupils' attainments are not always as accurate as they should be. Where assessments are accurate, teachers match their teaching very precisely to the pupils' needs and learning is rapid and effective. There are, however, lessons where some pupils are over-challenged and others where pupils could be moving on faster. Teachers are working hard to adjust their teaching to take on new approaches and methods. Pupils' books, as well as lessons, indicate that these initiatives are currently more successfully in place in some classes than in others. Pupils in the speech and language unit are taught well, enabling them to return and settle into their local schools.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's Artsmark, Sports Active Mark and Healthy School Award are evidence of the breadth of the curriculum, and the steady rise in achievement is a measure of its increasing success. More time, however, is required to help recent changes have their full impact on standards especially in lower Key Stage 2. The new curriculum is aimed at making pupils understand the relevance of what they are taught and is already very successfully promoting pupils' interest and desire to learn. Enrichment activities such as visits and visitors play a key part in this. Personal, social and health education has been given high priority and has been key in assisting pupils not only to develop personally, but in helping them to gain key skills, such as perseverance and cooperation, that help them learn in other subjects.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Strong levels of personal care are evident. Pupils are known and valued individually. They are kept safe and secure. All safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place and given high priority. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after. Pupils with additional difficulties are very well supported and the school makes good use of outside agencies where there is a need. Every effort has been made to increase attendance which, due to the persistent absence of a small number of pupils, remains below the national average. Academic guidance is secure. The school is making good use of the tracking of pupils' progress to help identify which pupils need additional support. Pupils know their targets and are developing understanding of how these help them to improve. The marking of their work is satisfactory but variable. Teachers are consistent in identifying the successes in pupils' work but, while some pupils receive well focused feedback about how to improve, this is not always the case.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Over the last three years, a significant and successful effort has been made to raise standards by the headteacher and senior leaders. Behaviour management issues have been tackled very successfully, both through ensuring consistency in pupil management and through redesigning the curriculum. Success is evident, for example, in the fall in exclusions from 32 in 2006 to zero in the current year. Self-evaluation is well established. Data are used well to analyse strengths and weaknesses and to plan school development. The school is, for example, aware of the unevenness in achievement in Key Stage 2 and steps have been actively taken to address this. Many of the initiatives to raise standards are relatively new and while their positive impact is evident, there has not yet been sufficient time to ensure they are being consistently successful in all classes. There is a strong commitment to community cohesion, both within the local community and beyond. Pupils are fully involved in developing the school community and productive efforts are made to promote their understanding of a wider community through the links made with pupils in other schools worldwide. Governors are supportive of the school. At present, however, they are somewhat reliant on the headteacher for information.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
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**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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**

5 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Barton Primary School, Torquay, TR2 8JA

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for your friendly welcome when we came to inspect your school. Your school is a satisfactory one at the moment, but the hard work of your headteacher, teachers, helpers and governors is helping it get better. We think that your hard work is helping with this, too. We are glad that most of you like school and were pleased to see that you know how to keep fit by getting lots of exercise and eating healthily. It was also good to hear that you feel so safe and well looked after.

This is what we liked most about your school.

- The better progress you are making in learning to read, write and do maths.
- The way that teachers choose activities to keep you interested in lessons.
- The good start made by children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The way you are taught to help and support each other so you grow up into mature young citizens.
- The way all adults take care of you and make sure you are safe and secure.
- The energy that everyone, including you, is putting into ensuring that you learn well and make even better progress.
- The high quality artwork we saw around the school and the singing of the school choir.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that all the changes staff have made to the way you are taught settle in and help all of you to make equally good progress.
- Make sure that the work teachers plan for you to do in lessons is never either too easy or too difficult.

We are very glad that you like your school and think you are right to do so. We think that you could help your teachers to make your school even better by continuing to work really hard.

Yours faithfully

Rowena Onions

Lead inspector