

Barrow Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119397
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339430
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Strong
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Marchi
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, teachers' plans, individual education plans, pupils' books and assessments of pupils' progress. They also looked at 65 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of boys in Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well pupils are prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.

Information about the school

In this small school 95% of pupils are White British and the number known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Each of the four classes contains more than one age group. The children in the Reception Year are taught in a class with pupils from Year 1.

Other forms of provision on the site, including a pre-school, breakfast club, after-school club and holiday club, were subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Pupils are exceptionally well supported and cared for and attain consistently high standards by the end of Year 6. One parent described it as 'an exceptional school with strong leadership and excellent, caring teachers!'

Pupils make excellent progress overall from their starting points and attain high standards by the time they leave Year 6. Standards have been significantly above average at the end of Year 2 for several years. Occasionally, boys do not do as well as girls, but this is related to particular group of pupils, rather than an identified trend. In the school's national tests for 11-year-olds in 2009 all pupils attained at least the expected level in English, mathematics and science and approximately two thirds attained highly in all tested subjects. This placed the school in the top 100 in the country for that year. The school's assessments and the work in pupils' books indicate a similar picture for the current Year 6. All achieve very well because of the excellent support and challenge they receive to meet individual needs.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress. There is a range of activities indoors and outside in all areas of learning and the systematic teaching of basic skills helps children make good progress in reading and mathematics, in particular. However, some activities where children work and play independently lack purpose in extending children's learning.

Morale is high and the headteacher inspires strong teamwork to improve pupils' progress and well-being. Strong leadership and rigorous evaluation of the school's work by senior leaders, ever striving to improve, have resulted in improvements in teaching, very effective assessments and high-quality marking. The varied curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils to learn. Pupils welcome the opportunity to choose a theme to study that interests them and to organise additional activities such as the Talent Show.

There have been good improvements in writing and in establishing a secure outdoor area for the Reception class since the last inspection. However, the school is looking to clarify the purpose of some activities for the Reception class, in extending learning indoors and outside. Thorough evaluation and regular improvements in teaching and attainment indicate the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. The very good practice of monitoring teaching and learning in subjects is not yet fully reflected in monitoring the wider areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- In the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that those activities children choose for themselves, indoors and outside, have a clear purpose in extending their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils make exceptional gains in their learning because they are fully involved in their lessons and concentrate very well. They are very thoughtful when considering how well they have learned. They are confident to ask for help if they have not understood and also to report when they have found a task comparatively easy. Excellent behaviour is a significant factor in extending learning.

Pupils make excellent progress and attain high standards by the time they leave Year 6. Achievement is outstanding because pupils' progress is tracked very carefully and any possible underachievement is identified and addressed at a very early stage. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally exceptional progress because their needs are identified very early and they receive very well-targeted support in class, in small groups and from specialists where needed.

Pupils feel safe because they have confidence in the adults around them. One pupil remarked, 'My school is safe, caring, healthy and kind!' Pupils have an exceedingly clear understanding of how to keep healthy through a balanced diet and regular exercise. The school council suggested the 'Friday Try Day' in which pupils are encouraged to try different fruits. They take seriously their many responsibilities in school as school councillors, trained play leaders and as eco councillors. They are fully involved in the local, rural community, taking part in activities such as the Pickwick Night and the Sheep Fest. High basic skills, good attendance and their ability to work together is an excellent preparation for the future.

Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong and of their responsibilities. The school is well on its way in developing ways to improve pupils understanding of different faiths and cultures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In all lessons teachers explain clearly what it is intended pupils will learn and pupils are given clear guidance to help them judge their own success. High-quality marking, particularly in writing, is helping pupils to improve and attain high standards This is helping them to move on more quickly. The very good systems for assessing pupils' progress are used well to challenge and support different groups. Teachers make very good use of resources, including interactive whiteboards, to demonstrate and explain in order to further pupils' understanding. They question pupils skilfully to ensure that pupils understand. The learning assistants are very accomplished in supporting pupils' learning in lessons and in small groups.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about a wide range of interesting activities, such as drama and the visit from a 'Victorian school master', which help them to enjoy school. The strong emphasis on English and mathematics has resulted in consistently high standards. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are used and developed very effectively in other subjects, for example in researching and writing about the Second World War. The curriculum is planned very constructively to ensure breadth and depth without duplication for pupils in mixed-age classes. There are good links between subjects, for example The Great Fire of London is studied in history in the same term as pupils learn about Light and Dark in science. An advanced website and virtual learning platform is used very well in many subjects. This can be accessed at home to complete and submit homework. The strong programme for personal, social and health education makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. A first-rate range of visits and activities after school enhance pupils' learning very well. All pupils are fully included and there is an excellent take-up of the many sporting activities on offer.

Pupils feel very safe in the welcoming and supportive environment, where they are known individually. Well-targeted support for all pupils helps them to achieve as well as they can. The most vulnerable children and their families are given exceptional support and care and are fully included in all the school has to offer. The school has excellent connections with other professionals to obtain specialist support when needed. The strong links with the pre-school group on site and with the local high school ease the transition as pupils move to the next stage. Pupils are very proud of their work in

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school, including in their roles as play leaders, helping to include all the children in games.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other senior leaders are constantly evaluating their work and striving for improvements. One parent commented, 'The school doesn't sit still and is constantly improving resources.' The headteacher leads the way in creating a caring community in which all adults and pupils feel valued. Many staff report how much they are guided and supported in their professional development. A clear programme of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's work points the way to improvements. New strategies for assessing pupils' progress have been introduced consistently and successfully applied across the school. This has led to good improvements in writing since the last inspection and the approach is now being implemented in mathematics.

Governors are an informed and welcome presence in school. They provide a wide range of expertise in supporting the work of the school. The good commitment to equal opportunities has led to very good achievement for the vast majority of pupils. There are clear policies to deal with any harassment should it occur. The excellent systems of quality assurance in safeguarding pupils ensure that policies are clear, detailed risk assessments are in place and staff have up-to-date training.

The school makes good efforts to engage parents and carers in their children's learning. This is extending through detailed information about the curriculum on the new website. Extensive partnerships with others promote pupils' learning and well-being tremendously well. Barrow Primary School is a lead school in the Learning Network of schools which work together to share good practice and improve teaching and learning.

The school has developed good links with the local community. It holds community events in school, welcomes local religious leaders, including an Imam and a priest, to address assemblies and hosts a local, over-65s Christmas lunch for the older residents in Barrow. It is developing links with schools that have children from a range of ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. The school deploys its resources exceedingly well to achieve excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception Year with a range of skills mostly typical for their age. They make good progress and attain standards that are higher than usually expected by the time they enter Year 1. Letter sounds and number skills are taught systematically and so children achieve well in reading and mathematics. The teacher plans a good range of practical activities in all areas. However, those activities that children choose for themselves do not always have a clear purpose and so learning is less effective than when directed by adults. The good procedures for assessing children's progress are used effectively to plan the next steps. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and receive good support so that they make good progress. There are very effective procedures for introducing children to school and so they settle quickly. Children begin to understand the value of healthy food as they have fruit and milk for their snack. They make a good contribution to the class as they take turns, listen to others and follow rules, such as only four children being allowed in the sand together.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. There are good links with the pre-school nursery on site which aids smooth transition. The manager evaluates the information about children's progress to identify and address any areas of underachievement. For example, the school took successful action to improve reading by providing more rhyming games, devising props to help children retell stories and by sending key words home to practise with parents and carers, who provided good support. The school monitors teaching in Reception as part of the whole-school programme for subjects. However, it is not fully adapted to take greater account of the wider areas of learning at this stage and the way younger children learn.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A majority of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires and almost all are happy with what the school provides. The inspectors agree with the large majority who say children are kept safe. The great majority say teaching is very good. The inspectors judge teaching to be outstanding. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that their children were not making enough progress, though inspectors found that generally children make very good progress during their time in school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Barrow Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 127 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	58	26	40	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	69	20	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	40	33	51	3	5	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	46	28	43	6	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	46	29	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	38	31	48	6	9	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	52	26	40	4	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	38	29	45	6	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	43	30	46	1	2	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	52	26	40	2	3	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	51	21	32	4	6	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	37	57	21	32	4	6	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	52	23	35	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barrow Primary School, Clitheroe BB7 9AZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and in groups and hearing how much you enjoy school, and how important you know it is to live a healthy lifestyle and to contribute to your community. We agree with you and your parents and carers that Barrow Primary School is an outstanding school, which is the highest grade that a school can achieve.

All the adults take very good care of you all and there is always someone to give you extra help and support if you need it. Lessons are exceedingly interesting and teachers make sure you are very clear about what you will be learning and help you to judge how successful you have been. You play your part by working very hard and behaving extremely well. Teachers take a lot of time to mark your work and to give you advice to help you improve. You make very good progress in school and attain high standards by the time you leave Year 6.

Children in the Reception Year clearly enjoy their new outdoor play area and the exciting equipment they can use.

When we inspect a school we try to suggest any ways in which even an outstanding school with excellent leadership could improve. The adults are going to make sure that the activities set out for Reception children to choose have a clearer purpose so that they learn as much as they can from their play.

I hope you continue to enjoy school very much and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Shirley Herring

Lead inspector

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