

Barnard Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111617
Local authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	378325
Inspection dates	23–24 January 2012
Lead inspector	Gordon Potter

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 of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Kay
Headteacher	Lee Walker/ Barry Lennard
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2008
School address	Barnard Grove Hartlepool TS24 9SD
Telephone number	01429 230300
Fax number	01429 230301
Email address	admin.barnardgrove@school.hartlepool.gov.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Gordon Potter
Julia Bayes
June Foster

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 28 lessons taught by 14 teachers, including joint lesson observations and visits to several classes with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers, and spoke to the school's most recent external Development Partner. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding and strategic planning, examples of pupils' work, assessment data and monitoring records. They also scrutinised the 78 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires from pupils and 17 staff. No responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were available to assist in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is also average. The school has achieved Activemark and Healthy School status. The school meets the current floor standards.

Since September 2010, the school has had two co-headteachers who have shared the leadership role. The long-serving headteacher works on a part-time basis alongside the headteacher designate who will take up overall leadership of the school in September 2012. There has been an acting deputy headteacher during the same period.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils, parents and carers are very positive about the school and its inclusive ethos. They welcome the way it develops pupils' strong social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness, keeps pupils safe, and encourages them to behave well.
- Pupils' achievement is good. From starting points in the Nursery class which are below expectations, they make good progress to attain standards which are average overall and in mathematics. Progress in English is outstanding, enabling pupils to attain standards which are above average. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Teaching is good. There is much outstanding teaching in both Key Stages 1 and 2 which enthuses pupils and helps them make rapid progress. However, the quality of teaching is variable across the school and, in some lessons, work is not well matched to the needs of individual pupils. This is especially so in mathematics in Key Stage 1. While there is some excellent practice, marking and target-setting are inconsistent in telling pupils how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they say they feel safe in school. Their behaviour is exemplary in those lessons where they are fully engaged by their learning. They enjoy school and say that misbehaviour is uncommon and is effectively dealt with by their teachers. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is average.
- Leadership and management are good. The system of co-headteachers has ensured the development and continuity of effective management in the school. Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. After a decline in attainment in 2009, they determinedly and effectively introduced strategies to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum which have raised standards to previous levels. Staff effectively seize opportunities to develop subject areas and contribute to school improvements. The governing body supports and challenges senior leaders well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rates at which pupils make progress and raise attainment, especially in mathematics, by:
 - sharing its existing outstanding practice in teaching to ensure that there is more good and outstanding teaching across school
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure that work is matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils, especially in mathematics and in Key Stage 1
 - giving pupils advice on how to improve their work and clear targets that will help them understand how to achieve the next steps in their learning.

- Improve attendance by working closely with families to help them ensure their children come to school regularly.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children's starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those expected for their age. Typically, pupils' progress has been good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 so that standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although attainment declined in 2009, attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically average overall including in mathematics. In 2011 it was above average in English. Pupils made outstanding progress in English between Years 2 and Year 6 as a result of well-focused initiatives to develop pupils' analytical skills in reading and their ability to write at length in subjects across the curriculum. While progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, evidence seen during the inspection indicates that as a result of recent strategies, including the targeted deployment of a mathematics specialist, progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and across school is now more rapid.

All groups of pupils, both boys and girls, and pupils with a statement of special educational needs, including disabled pupils and those with behavioural difficulties, make good progress due to a detailed analysis of their needs and tracking of their achievements. A review of the provision for these pupils has ensured that programmes of support are effective in closing gaps. Indeed, in 2011, pupils supported at School Action Plus attained standards which were well above those of similar pupils nationally. Most parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress.

This good progress in lessons was seen during the inspection, particularly in those lessons where teaching was stimulating, clearly focused, and offered pupils opportunities to engage with tasks which were at the correct level of challenge. For example, lower-ability pupils in Year 5 were challenged to extend their skills in using calculators and problem-solving skills by working out how much money they had spent and what items they could buy with a fixed amount. Occasionally, in some

lessons in Key Stage 1, there are low-level activities which do not effectively engage pupils or allow them sufficient time to engage with tasks and this slows progress.

Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers believe that pupils are taught well and inspection evidence supports this view. In the best lessons, teachers make learning stimulating, explain clearly to pupils what they will learn and how they will know if they have succeeded. Work is well matched to the needs of all learners. Teachers employ interactive whiteboard technology well to engage pupils, and plan effective opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities, including research, role-play, games and investigations. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a wide range of stimulating, engaging activities related to their reading of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* captures children's imagination, allows them to investigate for themselves and moves their learning on quickly in all areas of their development. While there is good use of the outdoor provision, opportunities are missed for children to have regular free access to the outdoor area.

Teachers use questions well to check what pupils already know and that they have made progress. There are strong relationships and teachers and teaching assistants interact well with pupils to support them in their learning. Lessons have a measured pace which helps pupils to consolidate knowledge and assimilate new learning. In an outstanding lesson in a Year 6 class, for example, pupils were probingly questioned to ascertain what they already knew, were challenged to extend their writing skills and offered time to reflect upon and improve previous work. They had a clear understanding of the level of their work and what they needed to do to take the next steps in their learning. Occasionally, work is not well matched to the abilities of individual pupils and does not offer sufficient challenge. For example, in some mathematics lessons, teachers spent too much time explaining, offering pupils too little time to engage with tasks and missing opportunities to check understanding. Marking is done regularly and is used well to tell pupils how successful they have been in specific tasks. It is used less successfully to tell pupils how to improve their work or how to take the next steps in their learning.

The impact of the planned curriculum is good overall. In developing pupils' writing and reading, it is outstanding. There are many activities which help pupils to see the links between subjects and to develop and apply important skills, including teamwork and writing. For example, work on topics such as coastal erosion, the Victorians and the northern saints, including trips to Craggside and Durham Cathedral, develops pupils' understanding of local history and geography. Research into life in Kenya or the history of Egypt and other faiths and cultures develops the imagination, writing and research skills. In these cases the impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are many highly successful and exciting opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects across the curriculum. While there are opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their skills in mathematics, this approach could be developed further.

Behaviour and safety of children

Pupils enjoy school, are very polite to adults and respectful of each other and their school surroundings. Almost all parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire agree that overall there is a good standard of behaviour at the school. Good behaviour was evident in all lessons observed during the inspection. In those lessons where pupils were excited by their learning, behaviour was exemplary. The inspectors talked to many pupils during playtimes and more formally in group discussions. Pupils say that behaviour strategies are used effectively and that the few pupils who find good behaviour difficult respond well to clear rules and sanctions. They say that bullying is not a problem. They feel safe and know that 'Buddies' and the teachers and other adults in school will help with any problems if they arise. The school council works very hard on behalf of other pupils and its members are particularly proud of the actions they have initiated to improve aspects of school life.

The school has striven to improve attendance and has significantly decreased the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent. However, attendance remains average overall because a few families do not see the benefits of ensuring their children attend regularly. This is especially true of younger children and some families who take holidays during term-time. Older pupils, who are more able to make their own choices about coming to school, have excellent attendance. Attendance is also affected by the significant proportion of pupils who require regular medical care for a wide range of physical needs.

Leadership and management

The headteachers, very ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher, the senior leadership team and the governing body, have a clear vision and a purposeful approach to driving school improvement with clear action plans in place. Well-targeted professional development and the sharing of good practice are focused on improving the effectiveness of leaders at all levels and the quality of teaching. Robust monitoring and self-evaluation present a clear and accurate overview of teaching and highlight the correct priorities for improvement. Leadership responsibilities are distributed effectively to include all staff, and all phase and subject leaders consistently apply the school's procedures to monitor and plan initiatives. The school has an effective system for tracking pupils' progress and this enables leaders to identify swiftly groups and individuals who need additional support to close any gaps in their learning. However, excellent target-setting methods have been recently introduced and are not fully embedded across school. Capacity to improve is good and has been strengthened by the succession planning evident in the way the experienced headteacher has developed the capability of the headteacher designate and the acting deputy headteacher.

The school has a clear commitment to and effective systems for promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. It has a range of effective partnerships: these include providing opportunities in music and sport and to support pupils who have a range of physical, learning, emotional and behavioural needs and their families. The governing body is highly supportive of the school, effectively manages the resources of an aging building and provides a good level of challenge. However,

some procedures to monitor aspects of the school's work are recent and not fully embedded. Safeguarding procedures meet the current government requirements.

The curriculum is good. There is a strong focus on developing basic skills in English and mathematics and pupils' confidence in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Across the school there is a coherent and systematic approach to teaching reading with a balanced emphasis on letters and sounds, comprehension and, as pupils become more proficient, inferential and analytical skills. Well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to residential centres, places of worship and to museums, help to develop pupils' strong understanding of other faiths and cultures. Accordingly, pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, arts and environmental activities.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



25 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barnard Grove Primary School, Hartlepool, TS24 9SD

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We particularly enjoyed your singing and talking to you about your school and your work. We were impressed by your politeness and the care you show for one another so that you behave well and feel safe. While older pupils attend regularly, some of the younger children are absent too often.

You go to a good school and your headteachers and the governing body know how to make it better. Your teachers look after you well and make your lessons fun, although occasionally some activities are not at the right level of challenge, especially in mathematics. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers, your lessons and after-school clubs and visits. Your parents and carers like the school very much. Your teachers have agreed with me that they can help your school to improve even more by:

- helping you reach higher standards at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics, by making sure that all your lessons have pace and challenge
- making sure that all the information that teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that is at the right level for all of you
- making sure that you know how to improve your work and have clear targets which help you to take the next steps in your learning
- working with your parents and carers to make sure that more of you attend school more regularly.

You can help by continuing to do your best and attending regularly. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Potter
Lead Inspector

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