

Barnes Junior School

Mount Road, Barnes, Sunderland, SR4 7QF

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils' progress has improved dramatically. Nearly all pupils are making expected progress from their starting points and the number of pupils making better progress than this is getting much closer to the national average.
- Teaching is good and improving because the teaching staff are highly motivated to continually improve their skills and implement new ideas received from training to improve progress.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are keen to do their best and very positive relationships between pupils and adults are evident across the school. Their attendance is above average.
- The school provides a safe and harmonious environment. Pupils are well cared for and they say they feel very safe in school. The staff ensure that all pupils are given every opportunity to fully engage in school life, including taking part in a very wide range of clubs at lunchtime and after school.
- Since the last inspection the senior and middle leaders have ensured that the school has maintained a relentless focus on improving pupils' progress and teaching. The school has a good capacity to make further improvements.
- The governing body effectively challenges all aspects of the school's work and also provides high quality support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More pupils need to make better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- The marking of pupils' work is not yet consistent enough to have a strong impact on progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 15 lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and reviewed their written work.
- Meetings were held with different groups of people involved with the school. These included pupils, parents, members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, other members of teaching staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were examined, along with the responses to the October 2013 school survey for parents and also the one for pupils. The school's website was also reviewed. The Ofsted questionnaire completed by school staff was also examined.
- A range of documents was reviewed, including information on pupils' achievements, the school's data on pupils' current progress, documents relating to planning for improvement, procedures for checking the quality of teaching, documents relating to safeguarding and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Barbara Hudson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Pattinson

Additional Inspector

Barbara Waugh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is above average in size.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding allocated for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.)
- At the end of 2013 the school met the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Over the last two years there has been greater movement of pupils into and out of the school.
- The school has gained the Quality Mark for Extended School Activities, which is in recognition for excellent provision for lunchtime and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress by:
 - providing pupils with opportunities to do harder work in mathematics so that they can learn from their mistakes and teachers can assess what they need to teach next
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to further develop their reading skills through researching and investigating topics.
- Ensure a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work so that they know how to improve and so teachers insist that these improvements are applied over subsequent pieces of work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Since the last inspection in September 2012 pupils' progress has rapidly improved because senior and middle leaders rigorously monitor and evaluate the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and because teaching has improved. The achievement of pupils has been judged to be good because of the recent rapid and maintained improvements in pupil progress and the school's good leadership, management and teaching and the pupils' good behaviour.
- School data and work in pupils' books show that the vast majority of pupils now make expected progress from their starting points. A proportion of pupils from the full ability range is now making better than expected progress but this proportion is not yet as high as the national average.
- The school's data show that pupils enter the school with a wide range of abilities, but overall their attainment is average. School predictions for pupils' standards have been accurate for the previous three years. Projections for the current Year 6 pupils and work seen by inspectors suggest they will be above the 2013 national average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. This is a significant improvement on 2013, when pupils' attainment was below average in reading and mathematics and writing was average.
- Pupils' progress is consistently better in writing than in reading and mathematics. This is because of the thorough approach to getting correct sentence formation in Years 3 and 4 which enables pupils to extend their writing and make very rapid progress in Years 5 and 6.
- The school is very aware that reading is the area where pupils need to catch up. The work to increase pupils' understanding of the written word is having a very positive impact. The holiday homework strategy to get pupils to investigate things such as 'Life in Sunderland' is proving very effective in developing reading skills. However, the use of investigation and research skills that require reading to draw out information is not evident enough in topic and science books.
- The school's work to improve pupil progress in mathematics is having a positive impact: pupils' standards are rising and the progress they are making is rapidly improving. In pupils' books there is very little evidence of them doing work that is so challenging that sometimes they get it wrong. This reduces pupils' opportunities to learn from their mistakes and for teachers to assess what different pupils can do and what they need to learn.
- Extra provision, funded through the pupil premium, has led to more focused support for pupils who are requiring additional support to make at least expected progress. As a result, pupils supported by this funding now make expected progress and a few make good progress from their starting points. In the 2013 tests, pupils eligible for free school meals attained similarly to the other pupils in their class and were one term ahead of the same group nationally.
- Most-able pupils are making good progress. All are making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils than nationally are making better than expected progress in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers motivate and set challenging tasks which the pupils are eager to complete successfully. In reading fewer of the most-able pupils are making more than expected progress because they do not receive sufficient opportunities to further develop their reading skills through research and investigations.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making expected progress. A small number are making better than expected progress. This is because the additional support, such as one-to-one and small-group work, is effectively tailored to the needs of these pupils. The support for progress of different groups of pupils demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching

Is good

- Teaching is improving rapidly. Senior and middle leaders have focussed on developing teaching through effective training, support and rigorous evaluation of its impact on pupils' learning. Teaching staff are given clear areas for improvement, which they willingly implement. Teachers

and teaching assistants work very well together.

- Good subject knowledge is used effectively to plan tasks that build on pupils' skills and extend their learning. There are occasions when work is too easy. This is most often in mathematics where work is not always hard enough.
- Most pupils enjoy their learning and are eager to do their best. Most listen attentively in lessons, settle promptly to their tasks and try hard. Pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are always keen to rise to any challenge that they are given.
- Pupils' learning is most rapid when explanations grab their interest. This was evident in Year 5 mathematics when pupils were introduced to long multiplication by linking it to their work at their local allotment. This made their learning very relevant.
- Pupils respond very positively to well-framed questions and instructions. This was very evident in Year 6 in English when questions based on examples from pupils' written work helped pupils identify what was excellent about those sentences and how they may be able to use some of those ideas in their own writing.
- There are examples of teachers using other subjects to help pupils improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, the opportunities are not frequent enough to help pupils develop better research skills so as to enhance their reading skills even further.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular, with some examples of specific feedback that helps pupils to improve further. This is not consistent throughout the school. Too often pupils are not given the time to respond to the written comments and do not follow the good advice provided in subsequent lessons. Even when pupils correct work, there is not a consistent approach to insisting that they apply their new learning in subsequent pieces of work and so their progress is sometimes impeded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life. They show care and respect to each other and adults. As a result, exceptionally positive relationships between teaching staff and pupils are evident. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because it is very well promoted in all aspects of school life. Pupils become very mature young people by time they leave this school.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the rewards and consequences of their behaviour and are very mindful of the school systems. As a result, learning is not interrupted.
- Pupils work very co-operatively in lessons and this contributes to how quickly they learn. Staff are very good at praising pupils so that they feel good about themselves and they want to learn.
- At playtimes and lunchtimes pupils play harmoniously. Many lunchtime clubs ensure that pupils have a range of activities to choose from and these enhance their learning.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and are confident that if it should occur, the staff would quickly help them to resolve the problem. The school's records confirm that incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are very rare.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations because they are taught a wide range of aspects about staying safe, including those relating to the use of the Internet.
- Pupils' attendance has improved because of the work the staff in the school have done to encourage parents to ensure that their children attend regularly and on time. This year, pupils' attendance is above the national average. Punctuality is also good.
- Thorough procedures to safeguard pupils are very effectively implemented throughout the school.
- Most parents are very positive about the management of pupils' behaviour, indicating that their children feel very safe in school and that they are well cared for.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, deputy and assistant headteacher have successfully driven forward improvements since the last inspection. This has resulted in rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievements. All staff and governors are fully committed to making this school even better.
- Middle leaders are very proactive in ensuring that pupils are making good progress. The support they have provided for staff is very clearly impacting on the progress pupils are making.
- Subject leaders provide an overview of their subject and identify the strengths and areas for development.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. Systems to manage staff performance are used well, both to support and challenge their work. Staff highly value the range of well-targeted training opportunities offered by the school and the local authority.
- Robust procedures to check the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements are in place. Lesson observations, regular monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work in their books, together with pupil progress meetings, ensure that leaders are well placed to tackle variations in performance.
- The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional development. Pupils have access to a very wide range of sporting, academic and creative activities. Many happen after school and at lunchtimes. Educational visits and visitors to the school are good. Friday morning problem-solving activities are beginning to help pupils use their skills in more relevant real-life situations.
- The new primary school sport funding is used well to increase the opportunities for pupils to partake in physical activities within the school day and support a wide range of school clubs. Within these sessions there is a clear focus on enjoyment, developing pupils' understanding of why physical activity is beneficial to their health and to give them opportunities to develop their interests and potential.
- School leaders and governors highly value the work of the local authority. This support has made a significant contribution to the rapid progress this school has made. The school works well with other schools and the local universities on a variety of developments. It works very closely with a neighbouring primary school to moderate standards of pupils' work.
- The school has a very positive relationship with parents. This is because the headteacher and many of the staff know each family extremely well and the staff provide good care for every child. Almost all parents are positive about the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. Governors are challenging, yet supportive of the staff, and have the skills and expertise to hold leaders to account. They actively seek knowledge through reviewing data, asking pertinent questions and seeking additional advice through attending courses and using the Internet. Meetings focus on evaluating improvements in teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. Governors use this information well to review the performance and pay progression of staff. They have a clear understanding of the school's finances, including pupil-premium funding and the primary school sport funding. Governors check that this spending benefits the pupils. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108755
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	442213

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Small
Headteacher	Hilary Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2012
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