

Barrington CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110781
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	337571
Inspection dates	14-15 October 2009
Reporting inspector	June Woolhouse

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	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Price
Headteacher	Mrs Francesca Catterson
Date of previous school inspection	5-6 February 2007
School address	Haslingfield Road Barrington CB22 7RG
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at the school development plan, teachers' planning, school policies, governors' minutes, pupils' work, monitoring records and pupil tracking data. Questionnaires from 49 parents, 12 staff and 49 pupils were analysed.

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

- leaders' capacity at all levels in reversing the decline in pupils' standards and achievement
- pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of learning, particularly in mathematics and science, and the effectiveness of teaching in meeting the needs of all pupils
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage to determine the impact of vertical grouping of Reception and Year 1
- the effectiveness of systems to monitor teaching and learning including tracking pupil progress and the accuracy of assessment information
- the quality of governance in holding the school to account and securing sustained improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The school carries full responsibility for children under five in the Early Years Foundation Stage and some Year 1 pupils are taught with Reception Year children. Few are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, the main needs being behavioural, emotional and social, and moderate learning difficulties. The school has the Healthy School Award and Active Mark accreditation.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Barrington is a satisfactory and improving school emerging from a period of staffing disruption which has affected pupil progress and learning. The recent appointment of a new headteacher has been very influential in arresting the school's decline and setting it on the road to recovery and higher achievement. She has provided inspirational leadership and increased the school's capacity to improve by galvanizing the staff into a committed team. She has quickly identified the key priorities for improvement and reorganised leadership roles so that all staff actively contribute to pupils' learning and progress. The governing body, ably led by the chair, has fully supported these improvements and ensured that all statutory requirements are fully in place. Safeguarding procedures are now a particular strength. Pupils are very clear that they feel safe at school. The vast majority of parents support the school and of the very small numbers who have concerns, there is recognition that the newly appointed headteacher has already made a difference.

Children make a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, starting school with skills expected for their ages. They make satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of the Reception Year. Currently, there is an over-emphasis on formal literacy teaching, in part to address the needs of pupils in Year 1, and there is some imbalance between child-directed activities and those led by adults. Pupils start Key Stage 1 with attainment that is in line with national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average and progress is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average overall but below in mathematics and science. The downward trend has been reversed in English with good reading and writing results, due in part to individual support provided by teaching assistants and helpers who regularly listen to pupils read.

Learning and teaching are satisfactory overall but variable in quality. Tracking pupil progress is under-developed. The curriculum is reasonably broad with improvements in pupils' access to physical education and music. Other subjects are not planned to give sufficient time to study in depth or apply literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. The time allotted to science does not allow all pupils to engage in practical work, plan experiments and engage in enquiry. For some teachers, subject knowledge in mathematics and science is insufficient to enable pupils to make enough progress, a matter the headteacher is already addressing through performance management and training.

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Pupil care and support are strengths of the school. The coordinator of special educational needs has improved support for individual pupils by involving appropriate agencies to increase well-being, especially of vulnerable pupils. These pupils make good progress in their learning and personal development.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. There is a very good team spirit. Governors commit time and energy to support the school and recognise that further training will improve their understanding of the school's performance. They are assiduous in their scrutiny of financial matters even when this has led to reduction in staffing levels. They have completed their community cohesion plan and are actively engaged in reaching out to the local communities. This is a fully inclusive school where everyone is treated with respect and consideration. The capacity to improve is satisfactory and increasing because of headteacher's effective leadership.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics and science by:
 - increasing teachers' subject knowledge
 - improving the accuracy of assessment of pupils' attainment
 - using this information to plan activities that engage all pupils in practical activities, independent learning and ICT.

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by:
 - embedding assessment practice to improve accuracy and consistency
 - ensuring that how pupils can assess their own learning is understood, planned and executed in all lessons
 - improving the understanding of assessment data so that teachers plan accurately for the next steps in learning for all pupils
 - selecting, sharing and monitoring challenging targets for all pupils so that they achieve more.

- Improve the presentation and marking of pupils' work by:
 - establishing a school-wide handwriting policy
 - establishing a school-wide standard for good presentation
 - ensuring that pupils' work is marked carefully and they know what to do to improve.

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

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- reorganising the setting and planning for all six Early Learning Goals both inside
- and out of-doors
- encouraging more child-selected activities and giving sufficient time for
- exploration and play
- making more use of the school grounds to promote children's physical and
- creative development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Different groups achieve satisfactorily and standards are average. Aspects of pupils' personal and social development are good. When pupils are given opportunities to talk about their learning in pairs, they behave in a responsible and enthusiastic way. Pupils make better progress when they are involved in practical work, such as scientific investigations or using computers to complete mathematical challenges.

Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 declined in 2009 in mathematics and science mainly as a result of changes in teachers. Pupils in Key Stage 1 maintained average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics although progress was slower in mathematics. Their speaking and listening skills are good because they are given daily opportunities to practise in front of their peers.

Pupils enjoy school. They talk enthusiastically about effective lessons and are very insightful about how things could and should be improved. They enjoy practical activities like sport, music and history and are knowledgeable about how to be healthy and feel safe. Their contributions to community activities through fund raising and visits are satisfactory. They have satisfactory skills to equip them for the future but numeracy skills are not applied to solving real-life problems often enough. They are very thoughtful about the impact of behaviour that interferes with learning and suggested pupils should be removed from class until they stopped behaving in such a way! However, they show compassion for their fellow pupils who sometimes cause disruption, and want to maintain harmonious relationships if they can. They agree that behaviour across the school is generally good. They have a good understanding of cultural differences in society. They are very clear about what they would like to see improved in the way they are taught including a more practical curriculum, more history, art, information and communication technology and design and technology. They are not entirely sure how much progress they make or the extent of their English and mathematics targets. Attendance has improved. Each pupil is monitored, parents are consulted about absences and very few are given permission to take time out in term time. This has improved attendance figures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	3

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Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' planning is variable and does not always identify what the learning should look like by the end of the lesson or involve pupils in reflecting on whether or not they have achieved what they set out to learn. Teaching materials to improve the accuracy of assessments against national standards are at an early stage of development and used mainly in English. When teachers talk for too long, pupils lose interest and the pace of the lesson slows down. Although the school has very good information and communication technology facilities, computers are not used effectively to allow pupils to practise and reinforce skills, especially in numeracy and literacy sessions. The identification of who will benefit from extra support is very effective. However, faster learners are not always given enough challenging work to reach the higher attainment levels. Marking is variable in quality and does not consistently identify in simple terms the next steps for progress to fully support pupils' efforts to improve or require a good standard of presentation, using well-formed handwriting and correct spellings. The curriculum is satisfactory but is biased towards the teaching of English and mathematics. Pupils enjoy and comment enthusiastically on the wide range of clubs and activities which add significantly to their personal and social development. Pupils spoke warmly of their appreciation for all that is done for them and know that adults are there to give support, when necessary. Child protection policies and procedures are fully in place.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where	3

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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relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff share a common sense of purpose and have a clear understanding of the headteacher’s aspirations and determination to improve the school. They know that this will take time and concerted effort from everyone. The school now has a clear priority to improve the quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessments to raise attainment, accelerate progress and increase enjoyment in lessons. Until recently there was no consistency in the process of assessing and tracking pupils’ progress or a common system to record teachers’ judgements. Governors are fully aware of their roles and give weekly support and challenge to the headteacher. The comprehensive school development plan, recently completed, clearly indicates the important areas that will be addressed to raise attainment and increase pupils’ progress. These include improving teaching and assessment strategies and understanding how to set challenging learning targets. The school’s self-evaluation is accurate in most areas and there is a developing learning culture, effectively led by the headteacher, to move forward rapidly in areas of weakness. Parents and carers are consulted regularly and their views are considered by the senior leadership team. Collaboration in the local cluster of schools’ gives further support and a forum for debate. The school understands the needs of the local community and several activities take place to include members in after-school activities. The school recognises that action needs to be taken to develop further pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom. The impact of this involvement has yet to be evaluated. Resources are deployed well but the falling roll adversely affects planning for longer term improvements. Training in child protection and safeguarding children is comprehensive and up-to-date.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly because they have spent increasing periods of time in school during the half term before they start full time education. Daily routines are well established and children are considerate and helpful to each other. There is a strong emphasis on developing reading and writing skills through well-targeted, individual and small group support. However, some younger children have too few opportunities to choose their own learning activities or to have time to explore the range of interesting resources. Very good information and communication technology facilities exist such as individual computers and an interactive white board but not enough adult support is provided to enable children to explore programs for themselves. Although there is free access to the outdoor area, the activities and resources do not embrace all the recommended areas of learning and there is sometimes no adult support to extend children’s thinking, speaking and social skills. Nonetheless children play well together and their behaviour is good. They are carefully assessed through observation and progress is recorded accurately. Some modifications to the planning and organising of resources are starting to generate more independent learning and exploration but there is still too much adult direction and not enough time to be inquisitive about things that grab their attention. Children enjoy dedicated physical education with a specialist sports coach. Parents and carers are fully involved in their children’s learning. Welfare arrangements are good and policies and practice to meet all eventualities are in place.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are generally pleased with what the school offers and the progress made by their children. Almost all say their children enjoy school. A very small minority does not think that the school informs them about their child’s progress, listens to their suggestions and concerns or deals with unacceptable behaviour well enough. They would like information more than twice a year. Most parents and carers say the school is well led and managed and this has been more noticeable since the arrival of the new headteacher. The school is considered to be

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happy and caring. As one parent commented, "They thrive in the wonderful family environment." Inspectors agree with their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Barrington 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	42	21	55	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	53	17	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	11	29	24	63	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	39	20	53	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	39	19	50	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	16	42	20	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	66	12	32	1	3	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)	18	47	16	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	18	47	18	47	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	39	19	50	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	37	19	50	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	45	17	45	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	47	23	47	2	4	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 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 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

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 pupils' 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.



15 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barrington CofE VC Primary School, Barrington, CB22 7RG

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for talking to us in such a helpful way and explaining what you like about your school and what could be better. Some of the things you suggested are in this report to your parents and carers. Thank you.

We judged that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. We can see why your parents think that it is a happy, friendly school that you enjoy attending. Here are some other things we particularly liked about your school.

- You enjoy school, behave well and are keen to learn.
- You enjoy your physical education lessons a great deal.
- Those who need extra help get lots of support, especially from the teaching assistants.
- Your headteacher is making a difference already and wants you to make even more progress than you do.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Teach mathematics and science better and allow you to use the computers more to help you reach higher standards.
- Make teaching more practical so you work out things for yourselves and for teachers to plan lessons that are at the right level and make sure you know your targets and what to do to improve.
- Improve how you set out your work, especially your handwriting and spelling and take a pride in how your work looks.
- Increase the amount of time Reception children have to choose what they want to learn and explore, and for the teachers to plan to use all the school grounds for learning each day

With best wishes for your future success,

Yours faithfully,

June Woolhouse
Lead Inspector

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