

Inspection of a good school: Bar Hill Community Primary School

Gladeside, Bar Hill, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB23 8DY

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2022

Outcome

Bar Hill Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Bar Hill benefit from a purposeful education. They are supported to grow and learn in an environment that is caring and supportive. Pupils appreciate the safe and friendly community where they come to learn and play. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils know that adults in school take the concerns they raise seriously and are ready to help.

Pupils are encouraged to embrace diversity and differences across their community. They describe their school as being 'one family of human beings'. Through lessons and assemblies pupils are taught to reflect on aspects of faith and culture with sensitivity and respect. Pupils are also supported to be proud of their individual heritage. The result is a community where behaviour is respectful, both in lessons and at playtimes.

Pupils are being nurtured towards future success. In addition to the ambitious curriculum pupils receive, they also learn about their physical and mental health needs. They know if they feel sad or anxious, they can access the 'hub' where adults in school will be ready to help. Pupils know they have a voice that is listened to. Their views are included in collective decisions and pupils know that their opinion counts.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a curriculum that sets out in detail the relevant knowledge pupils in the school need for future success. Curriculum content is set out in specific steps, starting in the early years. This supports teachers to assess pupils regularly and check that they are secure in what they have learned. This informs teachers' plans for future lessons. In a small number of foundation subjects where plans are new, the assessment routines are not fully established. Leaders are aware of the importance of this and continue to develop these practices as they evolve.

Staff use assessment data and positive relationships to ensure they know the individual needs of pupils well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND). This means that all pupils work together, accessing the same ambitious curriculum activities. Individual plans for pupils with specific needs are precise and detail the support that will help them succeed. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have made sure that reading and the learning of phonics are core priorities. They identify how this helps pupils access all their other subject learning. Pupils learn phonics in a carefully planned order to support them to begin to read. Beginner readers also have access to books that help them practise the sounds they know. This helps them to practise and grow in confidence. Some pupils have gaps in their reading knowledge. Staff support them to become more fluent, with regular opportunities for additional practice. There are some strengths in the expert knowledge staff have to teach phonics. However, leaders agree that expertise needs to be more secure across all the staff teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn to enjoy books and value the opportunity to be read to by an adult in class each day.

Staff are united around a commitment to encourage the use of spoken language in lessons. From the moment they start in Reception, children are provided with opportunities to see adults model language well. This has a powerful influence on them, and they follow the example adults provide. As pupils move through the school, they are increasingly confident to share their thoughts and ideas out loud. This is because teachers deliberately plan to teach new, useful words. They also dedicate learning time for pupils to practise using this new vocabulary.

Leaders' investment in pastoral support makes a difference to pupils. Pupils access a range of experiences that help them develop important strategies, such as ways to manage their feelings. They feel confident knowing that support is available if, and when, they need it. Pupils also have the chance to use their leadership capabilities in school. School and eco-councillors show high levels of responsibility for their roles. They work hard to capture the views of their peers. This means all pupils actively make a difference to their school and wider community. For example, pupils have worked to reduce the impact of their energy use on the environment.

Those with responsibility for governance draw on support from the trust to complete their role. They monitor the priorities that make the greatest difference to pupils in school. This includes the ongoing curriculum developments.

Staff value the collaborative working approaches introduced by leaders. They say this supports them to manage their workload effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a robust oversight of the safeguarding needs of pupils. They have invested in a culture where all staff are alert to the risks pupils may be exposed to. High expectations are demonstrated through the relevant and regular training opportunities staff receive to complete this role.

Staff share any concerns they have about a pupil and leaders rapidly follow this up. Where appropriate, leaders are determined to secure external support to help them keep pupils safe. Pupils are taught specifically about age-relevant risks they might come across, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The expertise of staff teaching phonics is not consistently secure. As a result, some pupils do not receive the frequency of high-quality practice that will help them progress as quickly as they need. Leaders should continue with their identified priority to develop staff and ensure all those supporting the teaching of reading have the specialist knowledge they need.
- Plans in a small number of foundation curriculums have been recently updated. Where this is the case, assessment routines are newly established. Leaders should complete the work they have started to embed assessment routines and ensure that pupils are securing key knowledge in their long-term memories in all curriculum areas.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Bar Hill Community Primary School, to be good in September 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ['disadvantaged pupils'](#) refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145801
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10240356
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Shirley Jamieson
Headteacher	Charlotte Linden
Website	http://www.barhillschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The substantive headteacher took up post in January 2020, shortly before the first national lockdown at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Leaders do not currently use any alternative provision to meet the needs of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher and assistant headteacher to discuss leadership of the school, including provision for pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the academy council, including the chair of the board. A meeting was also held with representatives of the board of trustees, including the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in three subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the lead inspector met with subject

leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector met with designated safeguarding leaders, the school business manager and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The lead inspector considered 53 responses to the online Ofsted Parent View survey and 53 free-text comments. The lead inspector also considered 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The lead inspector also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. The behaviour of pupils was observed across the school site.

Inspection team

Kristian Hewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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