

Inspection of Barrow Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Colethorpe Lane, Barrow, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP29 5AU

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since October 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this inclusive, supportive school. Warm relationships with staff ensure that pupils feel safe and happy. The school's caring environment is proudly supported by pupils, who contribute to it and offer support to one another. Aspirations to take on leadership roles are evident among pupils, who work hard to fulfil these responsibilities well. The 'Friday snack shack' is responsibly run by pupils, who also participate as members of the 'job squad'. Older pupils take pride in mentoring and buddying younger children.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils conduct is exemplary throughout the school and learning is not disrupted. Due to the well-considered curriculum, pupils are confident to express their views and ideas. Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and achieve well in lessons.

Trips and visitors to the school broaden pupils' horizons. These help pupils to see themselves as members of a diverse, multicultural society. Careers events are designed to inspire pupils' aspirations about future job prospects and the skills required. Pupils are provided with extensive opportunities to develop new talents and interests. Many of these help prepare them for life beyond school, including touch typing, cookery and gardening. Pupils delight in the sports activities available and learn to swim confidently in the school pool.

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

Children get off to a fabulous start at this school. Early language and reading skills are prioritised. Children learn rhymes and songs. Familiar routines help children focus and concentrate on their learning. Fun activities invite children to count and recognise numbers. Teachers are excellent role models. They help children develop social skills and play together. Consequently, children are respectful and kind. They show resilience when faced with a setback. Staff expertly support and guide children to develop independence and acquire new skills.

The school's ambition for pupils is reflected in the broad and carefully planned curriculum. The school forensically reviews what is working well and takes sensible actions to strengthen the curriculum. It has constructed a curriculum that sets out what pupils will learn as they progress through the school. In lessons, teachers present information clearly and precisely. They check pupils' understanding and help them when things are more challenging. This means pupils gain a secure knowledge in much of the curriculum. However, for some pupils, gaps in mathematical knowledge mean that they are not as fluent in number as they could be. The school also recognises that there is more to do to ensure that in wider curriculum subjects, such as history, pupils can explain, discuss and weigh up evidence successfully.

Pupils learn to read well. Daily reading and story sessions excite pupils, helping them develop a real love of reading. From the Reception Year, there is a clear structure and sequence to the teaching of phonics. Staff are well trained to identify pupils that need

extra help to keep up with the pace of the phonics programme. The books pupils read are matched to sounds they already know. This helps them become confident, fluent and expressive readers. The 'reading raffle' motivates pupils to read more and establish what types of books they like best.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the life of the school. Teachers know pupils well. This helps them to identify pupils' needs astutely and adapt learning to match the ambition of the curriculum. This enables pupils to learn together and make progress toward their individual targets.

Pupils' behaviour is courteous and polite. Staff are excellent role models of the behaviour they expect to see. High expectations for behaviour extend to attendance. The school checks pupils' attendance with rigor to ensure it remains high.

The way the school supports pupils' personal development and expands their character is exceptional. Pupils are highly respectful and have a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils fully appreciate and respect the commonalities and differences they have with others. Pupils raise funds for new equipment and learn to manage budgets. This develops their economic understanding. The wide range of interesting and extensive extra-curricular opportunities results in strong participation, allowing all pupils to develop new talents and interests.

The school consistently reviews the effectiveness of its provision. Governors use this information to ensure the curriculum and other aspects of the school function effectively. This informs their decisions to benefit both pupils and staff. Staff speak highly of the regular support they receive, which helps their teaching. The school seeks feedback from parents to ensure continuous improvement, resulting in high levels of parent satisfaction.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some elements of the wider curriculum, such as disciplinary knowledge, are not taught as well as others. This means that pupils do not learn this content securely. The school should ensure that teachers have the requisite subject knowledge to deliver these aspects of the curriculum effectively.
- The school's work to embed the curriculum is not fully realised in key stage 2, particularly in mathematics. This means that some pupils have not secured the mathematical knowledge they need to achieve well. The school should ensure its support for pupils to catch up on missed learning has the intended impact.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	124690
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10295012
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Wightman
Headteacher	Helen Ashe
Website	www.barrowcevcprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 October 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- This school is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2024. The next section 48 inspection should take place within 5 years of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy and assistant head teachers, SEND coordinator, relevant subject leaders, representatives from the school's governing body, including the chair and the vice chair, and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, history, maths and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at a sample of pupils' work across year groups and observed pupils reading.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and staff survey.

Inspection team

Mireille MacRaid, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jason Howard

Ofsted Inspector

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