

Inspection of Barwell Church of England Academy

High Street, Barwell, Leicester, Leicestershire LE9 8DS

Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Victoria Newman. This school is a single academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Maggie Spence.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Barwell Church of England Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Barwell Church of England Junior School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Barwell Church of England Academy as a result of conversion to academy status. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend Barwell Church of England Academy. The school has created a learning environment that feels like a happy family in which all pupils can thrive. Pupils told inspectors that 'everybody is welcome'. They are guided by the school's values to show respect and kindness as they learn and play together.

Behaviour is exemplary. The school teaches all pupils how to regulate their emotions and follow school routines. Caring staff support any pupils who struggle with this. As a result, the school is calm and orderly. There are no disruptions to learning.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to succeed. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have the same opportunities as their peers and are well supported to be successful. Pupils try hard and achieve well.

The school's 'journey to wellness' curriculum supports pupils' wider personal development exceptionally well. Through daily assemblies, pupils learn about spirituality, diversity and the fundamental British values. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities support pupils to develop their character and provide them with memorable experiences. These include residential trips and visits to the theatre.

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

The school's curriculum is designed to enable pupils to build on what they already know and gain the knowledge and skills they need for secondary school. In all subjects, the school has identified precisely what pupils will learn and when they will learn it. There are many opportunities to revisit important concepts. This helps pupils to gain knowledge securely and remember what they have learned.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They present concepts clearly. In classrooms, pupils eagerly discuss their learning and use subject-specific vocabulary accurately. Teachers provide interesting activities and lots of opportunities for pupils to practise skills they have learned. The school identifies quickly when pupils have additional needs. Staff provide excellent support when pupils with SEND need it. Teachers check pupils' learning often. However, these checks are sometimes not precise enough to detect pupils' misconceptions accurately or identify opportunities for further challenge. On occasion, teachers do not provide pupils with feedback about how to improve or develop their work. As a result, some pupils do not progress as quickly as they could through the school's curriculum.

Reading is a priority in the school. This includes a sharp focus on supporting weak readers to catch up quickly. Pupils read often from books that are well matched to their stage of reading. This helps them to develop fluency and confidence. The texts chosen for reading lessons raise important themes such as equality and injustice. The texts include challenging classic and modern stories, as well as poetry and non-fiction.

Pupils show highly positive attitudes to all aspects of school life. They commit fully to learning and participate eagerly in extra-curricular activities. Pupils line up proudly as they move around the school. They follow routines and instructions without fuss. Older pupils actively support their younger peers, spending lunchtimes together and acting as role models. The school provides strong support to pupils and their families to make sure that all pupils attend school often. As a result, attendance is excellent.

The curriculum prepares pupils very well for their next stages in education and for living in modern Britain. Pupils learn about equality and explore different faiths and cultures. They develop mature attitudes and celebrate differences. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy. For example, all pupils take part in a daily mile and understand the benefits of exercise and healthy eating.

Staff told inspectors that they are happy and proud to work at the school. Leaders prioritise the well-being of staff and help them to manage their workload. Staff work together to make sure that all pupils benefit from what the school offers. Parents and carers recognise and value this. One parent, who represented the views of many, commented that, 'Every member of staff is welcoming, happy, supportive and approachable.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. They do not routinely correct pupils' misconceptions or identify opportunities to challenge pupils further. This means that some pupils do not gain knowledge as quickly or securely as they might. The school should ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding systematically, and provide clear, direct feedback that helps pupils to improve their work and deepen their understanding.

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	138965
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10324158
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Maggie Spence
Headteacher	Victoria Newman
Website	www.barwellceacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become a single academy trust in 2013.
- The headteacher was appointed in 2015.
- This is a Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and with other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees, including the chair of the board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors also visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 held meetings and looked at records relating to attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, pupils and parents. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, as well as to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Steve Tague

Ofsted Inspector

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