

Blackwell Community Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112506
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357117
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Bunning
Headteacher	Joy Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons and saw eight teachers and one teaching assistant teach. They also met with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and safeguarding policies. The responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were those from 29 parents and carers.

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

- Are all pupils now making consistently good progress across the school, especially in writing?
- Is the school using assessment information well enough to ensure challenge for all pupils?
- How successful are leaders and managers in improving teaching and learning, and ensuring that the improvements seen in the past few years are being sustained?

Information about the school

In this smaller than average school, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Their needs cover a wide range but focus mostly on moderate learning difficulties and behavioural difficulties. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is a Sure Start children's centre on the school site, but it is not managed by the governors and is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The good quality of education this school provides for its pupils enables them to achieve well. It is the result of a clear vision and a strong sense of purpose, which are underpinned by good leadership and management and effective teamwork. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are thorough and developmental, and points for improvement are always followed up. This has raised the quality of teaching to good since the previous inspection. It has also resulted in a strong upward trend in progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress was typically good in the lessons observed. Subject leaders check teaching and learning, and contribute effectively to school improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and well founded, and the school knows what it needs to do to improve further. All of this demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children learn and develop well in Nursery and Reception, and attainment rises to broadly average by Year 6. More of the most able pupils are reaching above expected standards in English and mathematics, and the least able pupils are catching up well on their learning. Writing remains the weakest aspect of pupils' learning because their vocabulary is limited. This stops their writing from fully engaging the reader and limits their ability to express themselves clearly, including when talking about their work and what they do at school. The school knows this and is working on extending the range of experiences to stimulate their writing.

Good assessment procedures ensure that pupils' learning is tracked closely and the resulting information is used well in planning. This ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. Each class has targets for its pupils that meet the needs of all pupils, from the least to the most able. However, pupils are not always clear enough about their targets. They sometimes confuse them with learning objectives, and therefore do not understand what they need to do to improve their work. The targets are not always broken down into small enough steps to ensure that individual pupils can see which aspects of their work to improve.

Pupils behave well. They feel safe, and they are kept safe. The monitoring and tracking of their personal development are of a high quality, as are the care, guidance and support given to all pupils, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The school uses external agencies exceptionally well in this. The curriculum is improving as subjects are increasingly linked together with a strong focus on promoting basic skills. Pupils care for and respect each other, adults, and the stimulating learning environment in which they work and play. Their awareness and understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom are limited. This is because the governing body has not yet given enough attention to this aspect of community cohesion.

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Nevertheless, pupils' good progress in developing basic skills and the average standards they reach by Year 6 ensure that they are adequately prepared for their future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing, by improving pupils' vocabulary so that they can express themselves better and write more imaginatively in different styles to suit different audiences and purposes.
 - Refine target setting further by:
 - ensuring that all pupils understand the difference between targets and the learning objectives shared with them in lessons
 - breaking down class targets into the small steps individual pupils need to take to reach them.
 - Build on the work carried out to promote community cohesion, especially in relation to raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The small numbers in each year group mean there are some variations in pupils' attainment on entry, but it is most often below the levels expected for their age, especially in communication skills and social development. Attainment rises to broadly average by Year 6. Pupils are successfully encouraged to use and develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, including in topic work. Imaginative teaching helps them to enjoy learning and gives a purpose to their writing. For example, Year 6 pupils were highly motivated as they learned to construct a character by carrying out detective work on a holdall and raincoat with a range of objects in the pockets. Writing remains the weakest aspect of pupils' learning because of their inability to express themselves well when talking or in writing. They do better in mathematics. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils used their numeracy skills well to work out the relationship between the radius, diameter and circumference of a circle. They demonstrated good attitudes to learning and good ability to persevere in a challenging task. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils. The progress made by pupils involved in the reading recovery programme is particularly impressive in both reading and writing.

Pupils gain good levels of confidence in themselves and their ability to learn. They behave safely and treat each other with care and respect. They are proud of their school and contribute effectively to it and to the local community. Pupils willingly accept responsibility, for example, as school councillors and reading buddies, and know that they and their views are valued. They trust the staff to help them should they have any concerns, and report that any untoward behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils also know why it is important to follow a healthy lifestyle. They participate wholeheartedly in physical activity, including during breaks and lunchtimes. Good numbers attend the many sporting activities available in and beyond the normal school day. Pupils also learn about healthy food preparation, and they make healthy food choices.

Pupils are reflective. They learn to appreciate the world around them and readily raise money for charities at home and abroad. The international schools work undertaken with

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the local secondary school is developing pupils' awareness of global issues. However, their understanding of the range and diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom is limited. Attendance is average and the school is working hard to improve it.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	2
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	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are taught in many different ways that motivate them, add to their enjoyment of school and ensure their good progress. Teachers use assessment information and their good subject knowledge well in planning to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Their skilled questioning provides challenges for individual pupils and extends their thinking skills. Some high quality marking is evident in pupils' books, often related to the learning objectives for each lesson. However, it is not consistent throughout the school and so pupils do not always understand how to improve their work. In most lessons, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially for the least able pupils.

Basic skills are incorporated well into thematic work, often providing a purpose for writing in different styles for different purposes and audiences. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being but contains few opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures in the United Kingdom.

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The excellent provision made in the nurture group is typical of the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all pupils. The prompt identification of pupils at risk of underachieving, for whatever reason, leads to successful interventions that enable them to continue to learn effectively. The school's work with families whose circumstances may make them hard to reach is very effective, and is underpinned by a strong desire to do everything possible to enable the pupils to do well. The excellent partnerships with the children's centre, a wide range of external agencies and the local secondary school contribute greatly to pupils' learning and personal development. They also help to ease transition between different phases of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have successfully embedded in all staff a strong ambition to help all pupils do well. The role of subject leaders, some of whom are relatively new, has been greatly enhanced since the previous inspection. This has led to a shared vision for improvement, which permeates all of the school's work. Staff comment positively on their involvement in sharing the management of different aspects of the school's work, and the benefits this brings to pupils' progress.

Governance is good. The governing body has an excellent understanding of its role and has ensured that it uses individual skills well to challenge the school to do better. It has in-depth knowledge of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve, gained from visits to school and reports from the headteacher and staff. One area it has not tackled well enough yet is community cohesion. The school has an excellent understanding of its own context and that of the community it serves. Through its links with the local secondary school, it is raising pupils' awareness of global issues. The missing link is in promoting pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of culture within the United Kingdom. Despite this, the school promotes equality of opportunity well. It ensures that the needs of all pupils are met, and that all pupils have equal access to all it has to offer. It also ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of the need to treat others fairly, whatever their background or culture.

Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are good. The school is extremely vigilant in following up even the slightest concern and it liaises closely with the relevant external agencies to do this. All aspects of safeguarding are kept under constant review. This has led to changes in car parking arrangements to make them safer for the pupils at the beginning and end of the school day, and setting aside money to erect a

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permanent fence around the school field, for which the school is currently awaiting planning permission.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management ensure the children's good progress throughout Nursery and Reception. Effective planning and meticulous record keeping are informed by thorough assessment and tracking procedures. Excellent induction procedures prepare children and their parents and carers well for school life. Thus, children settle quickly into school routines. Staff work closely together, gently but firmly leading children into understanding why it is important to share, take turns and care for each other. Although some children find these things difficult for some time, most quickly grow in confidence and develop good personal and social skills.

There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. At times, adults miss opportunities to move learning on when children are working independently. Nevertheless, children enjoy the many exciting activities planned for them, commenting, for example, that 'we get to play but the teachers have to work'. Learning takes place indoors. Currently the outside area is underdeveloped but staff make best use of what there is, and are eagerly awaiting the imminent refurbishment of the area to be able to use it better.

Children are eager to talk about what they are doing, but take some time to do this because their vocabulary is very limited. Hence there is a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills, alongside opportunities in all activities for children to practise early reading, writing and number skills. Staff are vigilant in their care of the children. Any concerns about learning or personal development are quickly picked up and addressed through, if necessary, individual support programmes.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The return from the questionnaire was lower than found in most primary schools. However, most parents and carers who did respond, and all to whom inspectors spoke during the inspection, are very satisfied with the school. Typically, parents praise the school for how it helps them and cares for their children. They say that any concerns they may raise are dealt with immediately, and that they are 'pleased with their children's performance' and 'feel the school helps children to reach their full potential'. A small number feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, and that it does not listen to their suggestions and complaints. Inspectors followed up the concerns but judged that the school has very clear procedures for dealing with behavioural issues, and staff follow them to the letter. It reaches out to parents in many ways, addresses their complaints and, where appropriate, takes on board their suggestions. The governing body has been particularly proactive in this, holding a series of meetings to enable parents and carers to express their views about the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Blackwell Community Primary and Nursery 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 152 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	55	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	62	9	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	45	14	48	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	52	12	41	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	48	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	41	16	55	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	45	16	55	0	0	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)	15	52	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	52	14	48	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	45	9	31	7	24	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	45	12	41	4	14	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	41	13	45	1	3	2	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	55	10	34	1	3	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blackwell Community Primary and Nursery School, Blackwell, DE55 5JG

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about what you do there. It was good to see how proud you are of your school and how much you enjoy learning.

We found that yours is a good school because those who lead and manage it make sure you are taught well and make good progress. You showed us that you have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy, and that you willingly accept responsibility and take part in everything the school has to offer. We were pleased to see that you behave well. You told us that you can turn to any adult for help if you need it, and that your concerns are always dealt with straight away. The care, guidance and support you receive from your school are excellent. Despite all of this, we found there are still some things the school can do to help you make even faster progress in your learning. They are:

- help you to increase your range of vocabulary so that you can write more imaginatively and in different ways
- break down the class targets so that each one of you can see the small steps you need to take to reach them
- ensure you understand the difference between your targets and the learning objectives that are shared with you at the start of lessons
- help you to know more about the range of cultures in the United Kingdom.

You can help in all of this by continuing to work hard, paying attention to what your teachers say you need to do to improve, and trying hard to do your best at all times. We hope you will continue to enjoy learning for the rest of your lives as much as you do now and we wish you well.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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