

Blackbrook Community Primary School

Ashbourne Crescent, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2RA

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher, supported by effective senior and middle leaders, has a relentless drive to increase pupil progress and ensure high quality teaching.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are very well mannered, polite, courteous and helpful.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude towards their learning. They work independently of adults, demonstrate resilience and persevere particularly when tasks set by teachers are very challenging.
- Pupils are very well cared for by all the adults in the school. They know how to keep themselves safe and say that bullying is very rare.
- Teaching is good across the school and much is outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers plan challenging activities and ensure that pupils understand what they have to do next to improve.
- Achievement is good as pupil progress has accelerated recently due to effective teaching and the careful tracking of every pupil.
- Additional adults in school provide effective support for small groups or individual pupils who need extra help to ensure that they make good progress.
- Governors effectively challenge the headteacher to ensure that the school provides a very good education for its pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils make more than expected progress by the time they leave the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons, including short visits to sessions where small groups of children receive extra support with their learning. Five lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, examined pupils' work in their books, attended two assemblies, visited the breakfast club and observed pupils' activities in the playground and in the dinner hall.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents including minutes of governors' meetings, the report the headteacher regularly provides for governors, a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, documents showing how the quality of teaching is evaluated, the school's information on pupils' progress, teachers' plans and records relating to pupils' safety, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents and carers to seek their views about the school and analysed the views of 147 parents and carers through the Parent View website.
- The views expressed by 16 staff who returned questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Chris Chamberlain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Banting

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-size primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- The school has recently been awarded the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award Level 1.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that a higher proportion of pupils make more than expected progress by the time they leave the school through:
 - ensuring that teachers always use information about the progress of individual pupils to best effect when planning lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the Reception Year with knowledge and skills in line with national expectations. They make good progress across this phase, and this continues in Key Stages 1 and 2. School data, reinforced by evidence seen in pupils' books and the progress pupils make during lessons, show that, recently, pupil progress, including that of the most able, has accelerated and, by the time pupils leave the school their attainment is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been due to the high quality teaching across the school.
- All groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or who are disabled, make good progress in all year groups due to the support they receive from additional adults who work with them in small groups or on an individual basis.
- In 2012, the gap between the attainment of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding was one year behind that of all other pupils in English, whilst in mathematics there was no gap. The school is working effectively to reduce the gap in English by using the extra money it receives from the pupil premium to provide additional support to individuals, groups and cohorts of pupils where attainment needs to be improved. School data show that the use of additional teachers has accelerated progress for those children entitled to the pupil premium so that it is in line with, and often more rapid than, other pupils.
- Pupils are effectively taught the skills they need to become successful readers. Less able readers decode words by applying their strong phonic knowledge or by using contextual clues such as pictures. Pupils told inspectors that they valued their phonics teaching and were encouraged to read regularly at home to improve their reading skills. Pupils read widely and are encouraged to read both fiction and non-fiction books to broaden their experience of books.
- Pupil progress in phonics across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has improved due to improvements made to the teaching of phonics. School tracking data show that in 2013 a much higher proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check than in 2012.
- The school has improved its teaching of writing by ensuring pupils know how to improve their work, are given tasks matched to their individual levels of need and encouraged to work hard. Because of this, the attainment of pupils, by the time they leave the school in Year 6, is higher than the national average.
- A very large majority of parents agree that their children are making good progress in school.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because, although pupil progress has accelerated in all year groups due to the systems and support for pupils that the school has put into place, not enough pupils are making more than expected progress across Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching is good

- 'Blackbrook is the best school in Somerset!' claimed a member of the school council during the inspection. Certainly teaching is good and is often outstanding. Pupils are motivated and are keen to learn.
- The very large majority of parents who accessed the Parent View website and all parents who spoke to inspectors were very happy with the quality of teaching.
- Outstanding teaching was observed in every year group. Pupils know how they can improve their work through carefully designed feedback; pupils of all abilities are given activities with an appropriate level of challenge to ensure that progress is at least good, learning time is used efficiently and teachers explain clearly exactly what pupils have to achieve by the end of the session to make progress.
- During an outstanding lesson for older pupils, the class teacher regularly checked pupils' progress by asking each ability group if anyone required further support. Towards the end of the lesson the class teacher asked pupils to self-assess and grade their understanding of their

learning. Using this information the teacher rapidly responded by re-teaching aspects of the lesson that pupils were unsure of. These well-embedded systems ensured that all pupils made at least good progress.

- Pupils know how to improve their writing as teachers ensure that they have the criteria which will enable them to become successful writers. Pupils are encouraged to self-assess against these lists so that they understand what they need to do in their next piece of writing to make even more progress.
- Teachers at Blackbrook have high expectations of how well pupils must concentrate in lessons to make rapid progress. For example, in a class of younger children, the teacher reminded pupils to have their 'ears listening, eyes looking, lips quiet, hands still and minds awake'.
- Well-planned deployment of additional adults ensures that pupils with disabilities or special educational needs are able to make good progress. Teaching assistants work very successfully with groups of children, developing their knowledge and skills and ensuring a good rate of progress through skilful questioning, good relationships and well-planned teaching sessions.
- Teachers regularly make learning fun and stimulating. In one class, pupils enthusiastically interviewed each other as bee keepers as a stimulus for writing; another class was totally silent and thoroughly engaged when the teacher put on her special scarf and slowly revealed the book that she was planning to read to them; and in a class of older pupils, there was great excitement as they worked furiously for five minutes to be quicker at completing a multiplication challenge than the previous class.
- The quality of teaching is not outstanding because there are rare occasions when teachers do not use information about the progress of individual pupils to best effect when planning lessons. As a result, the work does not always provide an effective level of challenge for all pupils and some do not make the progress they are capable of.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are consistently polite, well behaved and proud of their school. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern or they can place a written message in classroom worry boxes.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They agree that there is very little bullying. School records show that any incidents of poor behaviour or discrimination are dealt with rapidly and appropriately. There have been almost no exclusions in the last three years.
- Almost all parents who completed the online Parent View, all parents who spoke to inspectors and staff who completed the questionnaire all agreed that children are happy and safe in school.
- Behaviour is excellent across the school because of the consistent approach to behaviour management and the mutual respect that exists between pupils and adults. In each classroom, every teacher and member of the support staff employ a similar calm, but firm, approach which pupils respond to positively. Occasionally, when pupils are not concentrating well, adults gently remind them of the school expectations, or with younger children an adult will sit very close to the child and quietly reinforce the need to listen carefully or not to call out. This ensures that pupils are ready to learn and time is not wasted because pupils have not listened to instructions.
- Pupils understand that they are in school to learn. They are keen to expand their knowledge and skills and demonstrate maturity in wanting to improve and make progress.
- By the time pupils reach Year 6 they are confident and well prepared for their next stage in education. Pupils' conduct when moving about the school, often independent of adults, is excellent.
- Pupils play together successfully in the playground. The school has organised additional adults at lunchtime to lead sports activities so that pupils can extend their sports skills and stay healthy.
- The outstanding level of behaviour and safety in school is underpinned by the school's excellent work towards the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. The school was awarded Level 1 as the inspection took place.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Staff and governors share the headteacher's vision of continuous improvement and work well together as a cohesive team to ensure that pupils learn effectively and therefore make good progress.
- Middle leaders successfully promote the best approaches to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school and lead staff training to ensure there is consistency of approach.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher and senior staff has ensured that the school has improved since the last inspection. For example, the outdoor provision for the youngest pupils has been improved and now ensures appropriate equal access opportunities for all pupils. The school has promoted pupils' understanding of the diversity of other communities through its work with UNICEF and by developing strong links with communities in Uganda, India and France.
- The school demonstrates a very strong capacity for continued improvement. For example, the improvements made to the teaching of phonics have ensured that the percentage of pupils reaching the standard is now well above the national average. In addition to this, the school uses its pupil premium funding very effectively to accelerate the rate of progress for those pupils whose attainment is below average in reading, writing or mathematics.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are extremely robust and fully meet statutory requirements.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and exciting. The school places appropriate emphasis on the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, but also ensures that children experience the full range of the primary curriculum.
- School staff are very professional and there is clear, mutual respect between parents, staff, governors and pupils. Parents agree that school staff are approachable and supportive.
- The school has carefully planned how it will use the new primary school sport funding to improve pupil participation and ability in sport.
- Staff appraisal is used successfully to improve pupils' progress, as well as linking appropriately with the school's priorities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. These aspects, including equal opportunities, are promoted well through all that the school does and make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The school works successfully in partnership with other schools in the town. For example, the headteachers of two local schools were recently invited to an informal review of the school's own self-evaluation to discuss the strengths and areas for improvement.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors understand the areas of strengths and areas for development across the school. They take part in school self-evaluation and regularly visit the school to gain first-hand experience of teaching and learning. Following recent training, governors are able to compare their own school's performance with national data and use this information to provide a suitable level of challenge for the headteacher. They understand how pupil premium funding is being used and the impact of this on accelerating pupil progress. Governors successfully use headteacher appraisal to provide clear direction for the school. They know how the performance of teachers is improved and rewarded, and clearly understand the areas that have improved recently in teaching and learning. Governors readily engage with parents through a regular questionnaire and a twice-yearly newsletter sharing the aspects of the school with which governors have become involved.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123737
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426816

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hollie King
Headteacher	Stuart Bellworthy
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 October 2008
Telephone number	01823 338138
Fax number	01823 352042
Email address	office@blackbrook.somerset.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

