

Blyton cum Laughton Church of England School

High Street, Blyton, Gainsborough, DN21 3JX

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress, achieve well and reach above-average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils develop a love of reading and the skills to read unfamiliar words with confidence.
- Decisive steps taken by leaders to improve the quality of teaching have led to faster progress for all pupils. Progress is good in all year groups and in all subjects. Attainment has risen at each key stage.
- Leaders use a range of effective training opportunities to make sure the quality of teaching continues to improve and that pupils acquire fresh knowledge rapidly.
- Pupils' positive attitudes make a strong contribution to their effective learning. They are polite and courteous, feel safe at school and behave well in lessons and outdoors.
- The headteacher has very successfully melded staff into a strong team and motivated them to aspire to high standards and work well together.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and plan well. This has improved many aspects of the school's effectiveness, such as attendance, which is well-above average.
- Governors support the school well to make sure that it meets the needs of different groups of pupils.
- The school has linked subjects together well which has have enlivened learning. Pupils have many opportunities to write at length and to be involved in local sporting activities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching over time to make sure that all pupils make excellent progress.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to develop as independent learners.
- Although teachers mark work diligently, they do not make sure that pupils have opportunities to reflect and then act upon the useful comments written.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed seven teachers and visited 13 lessons. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the English subject leader, pupils and governors. The lead inspector had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' work, looked in their exercise books and listened to them read.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, information on pupils' progress, and documents related to safeguarding and key reports and policies.
- The inspectors talked with parents at the start of the school day, considered the minutes of the Parent Forum, a school initiative to discuss parents' views, and took account of the 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also analysed 12 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Martin Holmes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Blyton cum Laughton Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils attend from the two villages and the surrounding area.
- The Laughton site houses the Early Years Foundation Stage, catering for Reception-aged children, and the two single-age classes for Years 1 and 2. The Blyton site houses the three mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2, for Years 3 and 4, Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding provided to schools to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and children in the care of the local authority) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school works in a collaborative partnership with three local primary schools.
- Two teachers joined the school, one in April 2013 and one in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order that all pupils make excellent progress through the school by making sure that pupils have more opportunities to:
 - develop independent learning skills to increase their achievement to the highest levels
 - reflect on and act upon the useful comments teachers write when marking their work to improve it still further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for their age in most areas apart from reading, writing and mathematics. In these areas, their skills are a little lower than usual. Arrangements for helping children settle are very well thought out so they begin to make progress quickly.
- Pupils enter Year 1 with sound basic skills and continue to make good progress. For example, the well-organised teaching of phonics (how sounds in words are represented by different letter combinations), coupled with teachers' highly expert subject knowledge, means that more pupils in the school meet the expected level in the screening check than is the case nationally.
- The school has developed a strong reading culture and there is good support for reading at home. Pupils work out unfamiliar words skilfully and have a good understanding of the stories they are reading. This makes sure pupils have the skills to go on and become fluent and confident readers, and pupils observed read with expression from books appropriate for their age.
- By the time pupils take national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, almost all reached, and many exceeded, the national averages in 2013.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils build on the firm foundation laid earlier and achieve well. They are particularly confident in their writing. For example, in a lesson where pupils were using personification, they readily discussed their ideas with their 'talk partners' about how to describe the creaks and groans coming from the dancing windmill.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2013, the majority of pupils reached standards that are above national averages in English and mathematics. The proportion of the most able pupils who reach the higher levels in English and mathematics exceeds the national figure, indicating their good progress. However, the lack of opportunities for independent learning at times hinders some pupils from achieving more at the highest level.
- The school has put in place effective measures to make sure that pupils for whom it receives pupil premium funding have their academic and personal needs well met. The small numbers in Year 6 in 2013 mean that comparisons are not possible but, the progress made by pupils supported by the pupil premium is as good as their classmates, and their attainment is similar.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because the school is committed to making sure everyone has equal opportunities to achieve success both academically and socially. The school carefully identifies what can be done to make sure they make good progress, and puts into place a range of intervention strategies that successfully addresses their needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. This profile has improved considerably over the past year due to the introduction of regular checks on the work of teachers, with an increased focus on the progress pupils make. The sharing of expertise across the school has helped to increase the rate of improvement in teachers' practice.

- Highly effective teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress. Accurate assessment is used by adults to plan appropriately for the next steps in each child's learning. As well as effective teaching of key skills, children are helped to think about what they are learning and to develop the skills of working by themselves and collaborating with others.
- Teachers have high expectations, especially of the standard of grammar and range of vocabulary that pupils use. Consequently, pupils' grasp of the English language is sophisticated for their age, as demonstrated by their provisional results in the recently introduced national spelling, punctuation and grammar test at the end of Year 6.
- Teachers regularly ask questions which require pupils to think deeply. For example, in a lesson on the book, 'Good Night Josie', pupils had to justify their answers by explaining how what was happening in the story applied to them and what they did at bedtime.
- Over time, work is carefully matched to the differing needs of all the pupils and in class activities teachers explain with clarity and precision what is required to complete tasks set. This makes sure that pupils are engaged fully and are able to make rapid progress.
- Learning is often rooted in pupils' interest and experience. For example, children in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1 produced good quality writing about what their senses told them during their visit to Laughton Woods. On this occasion, the enthusiastic children experienced new ways of learning and new avenues of discovery that led to rapid gains in knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching assistants support all pupils well, and particularly those who are disabled or those who have special educational needs. This well-targeted support has enabled all pupils to achieve well, particularly in their written work.
- Teachers generally mark pupils' work with great diligence. However, they do not make sure that pupils reflect and act upon the useful comments made, which limits their further progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are courteous, thoughtful and attend very regularly. They move around the school sensibly, play together well and look after the school environment. Lunchtimes and playtimes are harmonious and fun. Pupils and staff say that this is typical.
- Pupils treat each other and adults with equal respect. The school makes sure this is so by actively tackling discrimination and fostering good relations, both within the school and with the surrounding community. A recent series of lessons on democracy, rights and responsibilities, engaged pupils' interest well, and enabled them to reflect on making appropriate moral choices in a range of situations.
- In lessons, pupils concentrate hard and apply themselves well. They enjoy their learning activities, are keen to succeed and share their pleasure. This was observed in a guided reading session where pupils were excited about reading and welcomed the opportunities they had to tell their classmates about characters, moods and atmospheres they had identified in their stories.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that it is dealt with well by adults, for example by enabling them to discuss issues and therefore resolve them amicably. They understand the many guises

bullying can take and say they would always ask for help if it were to happen to them or a friend.

- Pupils' behaviour is managed consistently well. Leaders are using a policy which pupils feel is clear and fair. Pupils say behaviour has improved steadily over time. Pupils who have particular behavioural needs are well supported and careful analysis of behaviour logs show that this results in very few incidents.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of contexts. They know about road safety, and that they have to take care when using certain types of equipment. They also have a good understanding of the dangers posed by misuse of the internet and of mobile phones. Parents, carers and staff are positive about how the school manages behaviour and how safe pupils feel at school.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because pupils' behaviour in lessons is not yet exemplary. Although most listen and respond well, especially in the younger years, opportunities for them to develop the independent learning skills that would help them engage further are not yet fully established.

The leadership and management are good

- The determined leadership of the headteacher has instilled in the school a sense of high ambition and purpose. She has gained the confidence of staff and successfully implemented effective strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has brought clarity to self-evaluation, and plans for improvement are focused sharply on the correct priorities.
- Leaders, including governors, know the characteristics of the school well, including what they need to do to continually improve outcomes for pupils. Development planning is effective; a measure of this is how standards rose last year in national tests at the end of both key stages.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching in a range of ways, such as by observing lessons and by scrutinising work in books. They use this to set specific targets when managing teachers' performance and offer the most appropriate form of training or support to help improve practice. Senior leaders recognise that there are still aspects to improve, such as developing pupils' independent learning skills and their response to teachers' marking.
- The robust system for checking and reviewing pupils' progress has enabled senior leaders to judge the impact of new initiatives and hold teachers to account more readily for pupils' progress.
- The headteacher has enabled teachers and subject leaders to gain valuable knowledge and experience through training and working with their counterparts through the collaborative partnership with three local schools. The effect has been to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- The subjects taught provide a range of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Assemblies are a time of coming together to reflect communally on key values. There is a broad variety of school clubs. Books are chosen that challenge pupils' thinking and introduce them to different viewpoints and cultures. Visitors to school and trips that support topics studied add breadth and depth to pupils' understanding and broaden their cultural horizons. Pupils have opportunities to practise key communication, language and mathematical skills across a range of subjects. For example, pupils utilise mathematical skills when using shapes to represent rhythms in a graphic score during music

lessons.

- The school demonstrates its commitment to equality in the way the provision is being targeted carefully to make sure all pupils are making good progress.
- A number of initiatives have been successful in raising attainment. For example, pupils participate widely in physical education and sports and this raises their self-esteem and helps to support improvement in their academic performance. The school has embarked upon extensive planning to develop physical education to enhance the well-being of all pupils further and successfully use the new government funding. Incorporated in the planning are measures for leaders to evaluate how successful are the new initiatives. This runs alongside the school's current good promotion of a healthy lifestyle, supported, for example, by providing a good, balanced diet for the large number of pupils who opt for a school lunch.
- The school has worked hard to help parents understand its aims and has kept them informed well during the changes in staffing. Meetings of the Parent Forum have led to parents being more knowledgeable about the running of the school and understanding how data is used to plan for improvements. Parents spoken to during the inspection register overwhelming support for the benefits for their children and their confidence in the leadership of the school.
- The local authority rightly categorises the school as good and therefore offers light touch support when requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of how their school compares to similar schools and use this to prioritise areas for development. For example, attendance ranked lower than other measures on a national comparator so governors became involved in the successful initiatives which have seen a rise to well above national levels. Governors make sure that all statutory duties are met, such as safeguarding, and attend training that helps them to fulfil their roles more effectively. They have been rigorous in eliminating inadequacies in teaching and have appointed good new staff to strengthen the quality of teaching. They understand the link between pay and performance and preside over decisions that result in improvements to the quality of teaching. They are clear that good teachers will be rewarded but, should anyone not meet targets set, a pay rise is not automatic. Governors analyse the academic performance of different groups of pupils and regularly ask probing questions to make sure the school is doing all it can to meet the needs of all and thereby raise attainment and prevent any forms of discrimination. They follow particularly closely the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. They know, for example, that gaps have been eradicated in reading and writing this year and which initiatives led to this success.

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	120619
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425007

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Thornalley
Headteacher	Lynne Saint
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2012
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