

Blaise Primary and Nursery School

Clavell Road, Henbury, Bristol, BS10 7EJ

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- School leaders have developed a strong ethos of caring and high expectations throughout the school.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils make rapid progress from often low starting points to reach standards that are improving year on year and are now above the national average.
- Teaching is outstanding due to teachers' careful planning based on an accurate knowledge of pupils' abilities. Imaginative and exciting activities capture the pupils' interest and enthusiasm.
- Leadership and management are outstanding because leaders, including governors, have very high aspirations for the school and their actions have resulted in rapid and sustained improvements in teaching and achievement.
- The governing body is relentless in its focus on raising the performance of all aspects of the school. It uses the wide range of its members' skills very well to support and challenge the school in equal measure.
- A major strength of the school is the pupils' excellent spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. The school's high standard of care and expectations of conduct and effort foster in the pupils a sense of pride in themselves and in their school.
- The excellent range of subjects and activities offered by the school is carefully constructed to ensure a very wide variety of experiences for the pupils. This supports the excellent learning and personal development they experience.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning contribute considerably to the school's harmonious environment and their achievement. Pupils feel safe and secure, are very considerate of others and readily help each other to learn.
- Parents rate the school very highly and would recommend it to others. They particularly appreciate the no-nonsense approach to dealing with any concerns that may arise and strong support they get from the school.
- Pupils say that they love the school. When asked about the best aspect of the school, they spontaneously said, 'Everyone shines at Blaise.'

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 20 lessons, three of which were jointly observed with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were ascertained by analysing 18 responses posted on the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition to this, inspectors examined letters from parents, an evaluation of a recent questionnaire of parents' views on reading, and met parents before and after school.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books and a range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, the school's evaluation of its performance, school improvement planning, documentation relating to teachers' performance over time, and records relating to safeguarding.
- An analysis of the staff questionnaire, together with an ongoing dialogue with teachers and teaching assistants, gave the inspectors an insight into the views of the staff.

Inspection team

Tom Morrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jo Briscoombe

Additional Inspector

Dave Beddard

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' spelling to the same high standards as other aspects of their writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make rapid and sustained progress across the school.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are often well below those expected for their age. The school provides a range of strategies to support their development, and planning ensures that children make rapid progress so that their performance approaches the national average by the end of the Reception year.
- Results in the Year 1 check on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) showed that fewer pupils had reached the required standard than was the case nationally. However, when pupils re-took the check in Year 2 a higher proportion than nationally had now reached the standard.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 have been improving over recent years. The school is working very successfully to make sure that any pupils who fall behind make accelerated progress in Year 3. Current pupils in Key Stage 1 are making rapid progress and are on track to reach standards that are at least average by the end of Year 2.
- All pupils make excellent progress in Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment has been rising from well below average to slightly above average. School evidence about the progress of more able pupils in the school showed that they are making outstanding progress due to the challenging work they are given.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress because they receive very effective support from skilled teachers and teaching assistants.
- The pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make excellent progress. The additional funding has been spent on a range of measures to support the achievement of these pupils. The gap in attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics between those eligible for the pupil premium and others has been closing. In reading and writing these pupils are about three months behind other pupils in the school, whereas in mathematics they are about six months behind.
- The school has identified, correctly, that pupils' spelling is not at the same high standard as other aspects of their writing. There are firm plans in place to address this.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The majority of teaching is outstanding and almost all of the rest is good. This is because there is a high level of challenge, excellent questioning by teachers and teaching assistants, and because of the very constructive climate for learning that has been created in the school.
- Tasks in lessons are very well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. This is because the school has very effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' work and teachers use the information on achievement to set work that is tailored precisely for their pupils.
- A clearly understood marking policy is consistently applied, which provides pupils with feedback about what they need to do to improve and teachers give them the time to do this. As a result, pupils are aware of their own learning and make excellent progress.
- The excellent curriculum framework, with its emphasis on providing opportunities to develop the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding within the topics covered, allows teachers the freedom to plan and teach effective, interesting and challenging lessons.
- The evidence inspectors gathered from looking at pupils' books highlighted the strong progression that is evident over the years in all subjects, including writing.
- The school places great emphasis on improving pupils' reading. The improvement in phonics scores and the work on linking sounds and letters in Reception form the foundations for reading development in the school. Reading assemblies, guided reading lessons, improvements in the library, and sessions with parents to help them support their child's reading are just some of the

examples of work that has gone on to improve reading. The evidence from the school's reading questionnaire shows the improvement over time in pupils' attitudes to reading, in parental support for reading and in pupils seeing that they are making progress. This is also evidenced by the very rapid progress made between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in reading.

- Almost all parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website, and all of those interviewed before or after school, thought that their child was taught well. Pupils also say they are taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' high level of enthusiasm is evident in all lessons and pupils work really well both independently and in teams. There is a high level of respect across the school, engendered by the Rights Respecting School work and embodied in the warm, but firm, relationships between adults and children.
- Relationships are extremely positive and behaviour is excellently managed with a focus on rewards and responsibilities. This means that in all lessons pupils are actively engaged in imaginative activities and are very enthusiastic about their learning.
- There is a positive approach to dealing with behaviour with a comprehensive system of rewards. This can be summed up in the comment from one member of staff, 'All behaviour is a form of communication.' As a result, pupils take personal responsibility for their relationships.
- Parents and pupils are very positive about behaviour. One parent commented that the headteacher 'doesn't stand for any bad behaviour' and sorts out any issues quickly. The pupils said that if someone is naughty then, 'They do get punished, but the teacher helps them to be better.'
- The vast majority of parents, pupils and staff report that bullying is not an issue, and that if it does occur it is quickly and effectively dealt with. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying.
- Pupils understand how to be safe due to range of activities, carefully planned by staff and leaders, both in and out of the classroom. A good example of this is the outdoor education programme which allows the children to widen their experiences in a carefully structured way. Both pupils and parents report that they have been supported to be safe when using the internet and on their mobile telephones.
- The number of incidents which result in a pupil being excluded from school has fallen over the past three years. Attendance has been improving due to the effective procedures, and the figures for the current term are at the joint highest over the past four years. Persistent absence figures are also at the lowest they have been. However, the school leadership is determined to improve figures still further and this remains a continued area of focus for the school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- There has been a rapid and sustained increase in the progress and attainment of pupils. Three and a half years ago this school was judged as inadequate and it is a tribute to the leadership of the headteacher that it has come so far in such a short space of time. In the last two years leadership and accountability have been spread throughout the leadership team and across the staff body, and so leadership at all levels is now outstanding.
- Teaching has also improved rapidly and is now outstanding due to the excellent curriculum, rigorous monitoring, focused training and relentless shared drive for improvement amongst all staff.
- The school has very effective arrangements to hold staff to account for their performance. This is based on observations of teaching and information on the progress of pupils, including that gathered through scrutiny of pupils' books. Staff are provided with training opportunities and there are secure links between teachers' performance and progression up the salary scales.
- The leadership team has a very accurate understanding of the needs and priorities of the school

and has been imaginative in pursuing solutions. For example, the school has set up a breakfast club, introduced the Thrive approach to supporting improved behaviour, and established a nurture class in order to address the particular needs of some groups of pupils.

- The school has recently increased the amount of sport opportunities after school and has worked with local sports bodies to provide more focused training and activities in lessons in anticipation of receiving the government's additional primary sports funding. For example, inspectors observed a very effective session with members of Bristol Rugby Club. This, coupled with the popular outdoor education initiative, is having an impact in helping the pupils to develop healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this outstanding school and the headteacher, in her role as a Local Leader of Education, has been able to increase her support for other local schools as the performance of her school has improved.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors strongly support the school and are rightly proud of the improvements that have been made over the past three years. They use their skills and experience effectively to influence and monitor the work of the school. They are heavily involved in the life of the school through a series of planned visits, including visits to lessons, and through a range of staff attending governing body meetings. They examine the case for changes carefully, particularly those that involve expenditure, but once convinced energetically support the plans.
- Governors set clear targets for the headteacher through the effective performance management arrangements and are well briefed about how staff are held to account. They have a good understanding of the data relating to pupil performance, and are prepared to intervene to raise targets once they have been reached. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used efficiently to support the pupils for whom it is intended, and they assess its impact on their achievement. The governing body ensures that all national safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	109118
Local authority	Bristol
Inspection number	426700

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tracy Ring
Headteacher	Mrs Kate Rowlands
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2011
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