

The Blake Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Coggeshill Road, Witney, Oxon, OX28 3FR

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2014

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and standards are generally above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, especially in reading. A recent dip in mathematics standards in 2013 has been addressed. As a result, achievement for current pupils has improved and is now good.
- Teaching is good, and improving. Teachers and teaching assistants work extremely well together. They have high expectations of pupils, who make good progress as a result.
- Children in the Reception classes get off to a good start. They flourish in a caring and supportive setting.
- Pupils are proud of their school and look after it well. They feel safe and trust the adults who look after them. Pupils are polite, well behaved and work together extremely well.
- The headteacher and his senior team have been successful in improving teaching because the checks they make are rigorous and training is of high quality.
- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They fully understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge leaders effectively to secure improvements.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to make sure all pupils make rapid progress. There is some variation over time in progress in mathematics and writing, especially at the higher levels.
- Some marking in pupils' books does not show pupils clearly how to improve their work.
- Some newly appointed subject leaders are still developing their skills in checking the quality of teaching. They are not fully involved in observing teaching in their subjects to make sure achievement continues to rise.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed in 27 lessons, including some sessions to support less able pupils. Many of these were jointly observed with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- A selection of books was examined to specifically check the quality of teaching in mathematics and boys' writing.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, seven members of the governing body, including the Chair, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to a selection of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils during break times in the playground and lunch hall.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and to the school's own survey. They also took account of some letters from parents and spoke informally to some at the beginning of the day. Responses to the staff survey from 35 respondents were also taken into account.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including records relating to pupil progress, safeguarding, attendance, pupil behaviour, school self-evaluation and action plans relating to the government's primary sport funding and the pupil premium.

Inspection team

Penny Spencer, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Alwynne Jolly	Additional Inspector
Stephen Palmer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for extra government funding, known as the pupil premium, is very low. In this school this funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading and mathematics.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2012 and there have been several changes in the leadership team since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so more is outstanding, to raise standards further by:
 - making sure teachers in all classes mark work in a way that clearly explains to pupils how they can improve further
 - ensuring all pupils have more regular opportunities to respond to this advice and so make more rapid progress.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching through observations of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception classes with skills that are typical of those found nationally. They make good progress in a caring and supportive environment. Adults are skilled in engaging the children in conversation and, as a result, children are confident to ask questions and develop their learning. Pupils enter Year 1 with levels of development above the national average, especially in reading.
- The teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) has been improved and is good. Higher than average proportions of pupils met the expected standards in the phonic screening check in 2013. Current assessment information indicates this trend is set to continue.
- Pupils who read to inspectors show a love of reading. Younger pupils confidently use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils read well and understand the various ways in which authors develop characters and plots.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have been above average over time. Standards at the higher Level 3 are more variable but are at least in line with national expectations. Current assessment information indicates that more pupils are working within this higher level as a result of improved teaching. Standards are rising.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and standards over time, at the end of Year 6, are in line or above national averages in all subjects.
- A dip in standards at the higher levels in mathematics in 2013 was swiftly addressed by school leaders and current information for Year 6 indicates strong improvement in their attainment.
- The school uses the pupil premium effectively to support the very small numbers of pupils who are eligible. As a result these pupils attain standards in line with, or above, their peers in all year groups. There was no difference in the achievement of this group of pupils and their peers in either English or mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2013.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because lessons are planned carefully and the quality of support they receive is of a very high standard.
- Achievement is not outstanding because whilst more able pupils generally make good progress they are not consistently achieving at the highest levels. Current assessment information would indicate this picture is improving steadily throughout the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Work is planned carefully and is set at an increasingly challenging level for most pupils.
- Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and work in pupils' books shows how pupils strive to do well.
- Activities engage pupils and allow them to apply their skills across a range of subjects. Teachers actively encourage pupils to have a go at the more challenging tasks on offer. Pupils respond to this positively and show high levels of resilience when working.
- Children in the Reception classes are taught well and all adults are equally effective in developing pupils' understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants were observed teaching phonics (the way letters are sounded) to different ability groups extremely successfully. The activities are fun and are pitched at exactly the right level to keep the children interested and making progress.
- Teachers are very skilled at assessing how well pupils are doing during lessons and adapting their teaching to ensure progress is maintained. Work in pupils' books shows how progress over time is improved by this understanding, with examples of extra work being undertaken to deepen understanding, or a swift change to harder examples.
- Pupils work extremely well together on collaborative tasks. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, a group of the most able pupils were drawing on each other's skills and

knowledge to accurately solve complex problems involving percentages and money. They made very good progress as a result.

- Good subject knowledge and effective questioning demonstrated by teachers and teaching assistants are used well to tackle gaps in understanding and to consolidate.
- Marking is regular and most teachers give good advice on what needs to be done to improve to the next stage. However, this is not consistent across all classes.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to respond to this advice. However, evidence in books shows this is not happening in every class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are happy at school. They are polite and look after each other well.
- Pupils take a pride in their work and their school. They present their work neatly and look after the equipment they use. Eco champions and the school councillors ensure resources are used efficiently and the outside areas are well kept.
- Pupils say behaviour is generally good in the playground and they like the opportunity to play in the extended grounds. Any problems are quickly sorted out by adults.
- A very few parents have expressed some concern about the behaviour in the playground. The school responded quickly by ensuring more adults are available. Evidence from school records shows a rapid decrease in the number of incidents over a short period of time.
- Pupils say bullying is very uncommon and they are confident the school would act quickly to resolve the situation. They are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff are caring and pupils are valued as individuals. Most parents are very supportive of the school and feel their children are well looked after.
- Equality of opportunity is absolutely central to the school's vision and practice. Discrimination is not tolerated in any form. The school promotes diversity and teaches pupils about life in a multicultural society.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities outside lessons. Music and art are strongly promoted and excellent examples of art work add to the vibrant displays in the corridors. Every year group produces an annual production throughout the year, which allows all pupils to develop their skills in drama and singing.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Leaders robustly tackle the occasional problem of holidays being taken in term time by not authorising any holidays, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because some parents still feel more could be done to improve behaviour in the playground, and pupils also expressed the view that things could be even better.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led and managed. All staff and the governing body wholeheartedly support the headteacher and the changes he has introduced since his appointment. They are a cohesive and supportive team.
- The headteacher's checking of how well the school is doing is accurate and plans for improvement are thorough. They focus on appropriate priorities and are checked regularly to see how the actions are progressing.
- Careful checking of teaching has led to improvements over time. High quality professional training and excellent mentoring from the senior leaders ensure improvements are sustained.
- The management of teachers' performance is firmly linked to pupils' achievement and targets reflect the desire to continually improve outcomes for pupils.

- Assessment information on pupil progress is detailed and systems and procedures for sharing this information with staff and governors are strong. Leaders and teachers use this information accurately to ensure pupils' progress is accelerated.
- Subject leaders check the quality of teaching and learning in a variety of ways, such as the analysis of assessment information, examining the work in pupils' books and through professional discussions. They are yet to be fully involved in observing lessons to assess the quality of teaching.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of subjects the school provides and they are being refined further to meet the new National Curriculum requirements. Opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in literacy and mathematics are good. The school makes good use of local links to provide exciting opportunities for pupils to visit interesting places and take part in events. A recent highly successful science and mathematics week saw visits from university professors, engineers, designers and skilled tradesmen demonstrating how these areas of learning are applied in the world of work.
- Senior leaders allocate the pupil premium funding precisely. Interventions and booster classes support pupils of all abilities and, as a result, these pupils achieve in line with, or above, their peers.
- The school works well with local schools in the area and within the diocese. These partnerships support the checking of the accuracy of assessments and in developing leaders.
- The primary sport funding is being used effectively to improve teachers' skills and increase the number of clubs and competitions for pupils. Impact of this funding is seen in an increased take up by pupils attending clubs and very successful team results. Opportunities for the checking of these arrangements are frequent and detailed.
- The local authority provides a light touch to this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are a highly skilled and very effective team. They are a very visible presence in the life of the school. They offer excellent levels of support and challenge to leaders and are ambitious for its continued success. They are very knowledgeable and have an excellent understanding of where the school stands in relation to other schools nationally. They are well trained to analyse and check assessment information accurately. They oversee performance management arrangements to ensure teachers are only rewarded for the best practice. They are aware of how the pupil premium and sport funding is used, and the impact this is having on pupils' achievement. They manage the budget effectively and have ensured that the school offers good value for money. They have ensured all 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	123192
Local authority	Oxford
Inspection number	444249

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	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Knowles
Headteacher	Tim Edwards-Grundy
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 September 2010
Telephone number	01993 702840
Email address	office.3600@blake.oxon.sch.uk

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