

# Blue Coat Church of England Aided Junior School

Springhill Road, Walsall, West Midlands, WS1 2LP

## Inspection dates

30 April–01 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The executive headteacher provides strong and effective leadership to the school. He is well supported by the head of school and other leaders who share his high expectations. This has led to improvements in teaching and has raised achievement by pupils, particularly in reading.
- Teaching is now good, with some that is outstanding. Pupils say that their teachers make learning enjoyable and interesting.
- Achievement is good overall, with attainment rising in all year groups. Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those new to speaking English receive good support which enables them to achieve well.
- Governors provide challenge and support for school leaders. They have a clear understanding of the school and its performance, and show strong commitment to ensuring all pupils achieve well.
- Pupils behave well and they feel safe in school. They understand the importance of working hard and display good attitudes to learning.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly good. It makes an important contribution to their positive attitudes to each other and their work. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school is particularly effective in ensuring that the varying needs of its socially and ethnically diverse intake are appropriately met. Pupils and parents value the high levels of support and care that the school provides.
- The very large majority of parents are positive about the work of the school. They recognise and appreciate the benefits that involvement in the federation has brought about.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The work set for the most-able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging. As a result, not enough pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work is not consistently good across the school. This is because pupils are not always given sufficient guidance to enable them to help them improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and the head of school.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons. They attended an assembly.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; records of how teaching is managed; and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other staff, including senior and subject leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body. He met with a representative of the local authority and two representatives of the diocesan education board.
- The inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They talked to parents at the beginning and end of the school day and considered letters from parents. Inspectors also looked at the five responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Adam Hewett, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Alwyne Jolly

Additional inspector

Sharona Semlali

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Blue Coat Church of England Junior School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils – those who are supported by the pupil premium funding – is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average compared to similar schools nationally.
- Over three quarters of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, a proportion which is well above average compared to similar schools nationally. The largest group are of Pakistani heritage. More pupils speak English as an additional language than in most schools.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club and an after-school club for its own pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school is part of the Blue Coat Federation of schools, together with Blue Coat Church of England Infant School. Both schools are led by an executive headteacher. The day-to-day running of the school is managed by the head of school. There is a single governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding levels and increase the proportion of pupils who make better than expected progress by ensuring that teachers:
  - provide better opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their skills in mathematics and writing in other subjects in order to deepen their understanding
  - always provide sufficiently challenging work for the most-able pupils
  - improve marking so that it consistently shows pupils how to make their work better.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The school is extremely well led by the executive headteacher, who divides his time between the two schools in the federation. He has established a clear direction for the work of the school and all staff share his high expectations. He has focused successfully on improving teaching and creating a culture where all pupils are expected to and can achieve well. As a result, pupils across the school now make good progress, behave well and thrive, both socially and academically.
- The executive headteacher is very well supported by the head of school, who leads and manages the school on a day-to-day basis and is highly effective in this role because of his detailed knowledge of the individual pupils.
- Involvement in the federation has helped to ensure that there is now continuity of learning when the pupils move from the infant school to Blue Coat Junior School. Staff from both schools work together to share their assessments of pupils' progress and to match teaching to the specific needs of all the pupils. This is helping to ensure that pupils achieve higher standards by the time they leave the school.
- Year group and subject leaders make a good contribution to the quality of education. Leaders provide effective support and advice to colleagues, and monitor teaching and standards in their areas of responsibility. The work of the leader for special educational needs has been effective in identifying the specific needs of pupils and providing appropriate support. This has helped to ensure that these pupils are now making progress in line with others in school.
- The curriculum is of good quality and promotes pupils' achievement well. The school has adapted its approach to meet the needs of the new national curriculum. Subjects are taught through a series of interesting topics that enable pupils to develop their skills and knowledge, and to learn about the wider world. For example, pupils worked together well using their artistic skills to build a large and colourful model of an elephant that is to be displayed at Lichfield Cathedral. While opportunities are being developed for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical learning in other subjects, this is not applied consistently across all classes.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly good. This aspect of the school's work is very effective in supporting and promoting core British values of tolerance, respect and understanding. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about and be involved in both the local and wider society. For example, each year pupils from the school attend a ceremony in Walsall involving the Mayor where they learn about the principles of democracy. They develop respect for other cultures and beliefs through visits to various places of worship and through ongoing strong links with a school in Kenya. Assemblies are used well to develop a sense of community and celebration, with pupils joining in enthusiastically with the singing of hymns.
- The school ethos is firmly based on promoting equality of opportunity and making sure that there is no discrimination of any kind, and school leaders are effective in ensuring that this is achieved.
- Funding for pupils who are disadvantaged is having a good impact on accelerating the learning of these pupils and narrowing gaps in attainment. Additional support is provided either in small groups or in one-to-one sessions by qualified staff. This has made it possible for teachers and teaching assistants to identify and fill the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The school makes good use of its additional primary physical education and sport funding to employ specialist sports coaches each week. This has widened the sporting opportunities available to the pupils and has helped develop staff confidence in teaching a wider range of physical activities. It has also used its funding to enable pupils to take part in after-school clubs and competitive sports against other schools. This has contributed to improving pupils' understanding of how they can keep healthy and their physical well-being.
- The leadership of teaching is managed well. Teachers are set clear targets based on the pupils' progress and their own development needs. Progress towards these targets is monitored regularly. Training is provided through the federation to enable them to improve their teaching and leadership responsibilities. Targets are appropriately linked to pay, so that good performance can be rewarded.
- Safeguarding systems are good and meet current requirements. Checks on all adults who work with pupils are thorough and leaders make sure that staff are regularly trained in safeguarding and child protection. Links with outside agencies are used well to support this aspect of the school's work.
- The local authority provides good support and challenge to the school. Together with the diocesan education board, it has been involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and in providing advice on how the school can improve further. It recognises the strength of the federation and the impact that the headteacher has had on improving teaching.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is an effective force in ensuring that the school continues to improve. They have recently undertaken a review of their own effectiveness; this has helped them to deepen their understanding of how the school is performing and their knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors have a good understanding of the data on pupils' achievement and are able to ask increasingly challenging questions of school leaders. They know about the quality of teaching, partly through their own visits to the school and through detailed reports from the executive headteacher.
- Governors ensure that teachers' performance is well managed and that there are clear links between this and their pay progression. They manage the finance and resources that are available to the school, including the pupil premium, well and measure the impact of spending on pupil achievement.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have a clear understanding of the reasons why it is important to behave well and recognise that their actions can have an impact on other people. They show respect and consideration for each other and for adults.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They stand aside to let other people through doorways and move around the school site carefully, remembering to walk when inside the buildings. They show respect for each other's cultural differences. For example, the many pupils who speak other languages apart from English are encouraged to support new arrivals to the school by speaking to them in their own language.
- Pupils display positive attitudes towards learning and participate enthusiastically in lessons, and this helps them to make good progress. Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. The before- and after-school provision provides a positive experience for pupils who need to arrive early or leave late, and offers an interesting range of well-run activities.
- The school has clear policies in place for managing behaviour and for recording any incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Good use is made of additional support staff who are trained in dealing with and supporting the small number of pupils who at times display more challenging behaviour. This helps to ensure that learning is rarely disrupted for other pupils.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility and show strong moral and social understanding in the various jobs they undertake around school, including acting as monitors at playtime. They are developing a strong sense of British values, such as democracy and tolerance. This was reflected in their active and enthusiastic participation as candidates and voters in school elections in the week leading up to the national general election.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in its different forms, such as cyber bullying and homophobic bullying, and know why it is unacceptable. They say it is very rare in the school, but that they are confident that if it were to occur that they could speak to any adult and it would be effectively and swiftly dealt with.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations, including when using the internet and when walking close to the road, because of the good guidance they receive from teachers and other adults. They are taught about water safety through regular lessons at the school's on-site swimming pool.
- The very large majority of parents have an extremely positive view of the school. They believe that their children are well looked after, safe and happy. Parents commented positively on the support that their children have received since starting at the school to ensure they settle in quickly.
- The school gives high priority to ensuring pupils are kept safe. All safeguarding procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as required. All adults are given appropriate training in child protection procedures.

## The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good, with some that is outstanding. All teachers have high expectations of their pupils and tasks are usually well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well and, as

result, lessons are calm and productive. Pupils settle quickly to tasks and work hard to achieve high standards. The presentation of both written work and mathematical calculations is of a high standard.

- Teachers use questions well to probe pupils' understanding and match the questions well to the different abilities of the pupils. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged to clearly explain their understanding of ratio and proportion using accurate and complex mathematical language.
- Reading is taught very well through daily guided reading sessions that focus on pupils developing their understanding of the texts they are reading and developing fluency and expression when reading aloud. Younger pupils make good use of their phonic skills (matching letters to the sounds they make) to read unfamiliar words confidently. Pupils are expected to read regularly at home and this is supported well by parents. Pupils develop a real interest in reading and this results in higher levels of attainment than in other subjects.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work has been improved since the last inspection and is now used well to measure progress and set targets for achievement. Teachers from different year groups are provided with regular opportunities to compare and consider their assessments to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the school.
- Teaching assistants and other adults provide good support for pupils in lessons and in small groups, developing specific skills. This is particularly effective in supporting the good progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The school has improved the teaching of writing since the last inspection. Teachers set a wide and interesting range of subjects for pupils to write about and make sure that pupils plan their writing carefully. They provide them with prompts and guidance on how to set out their work and there are good opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces of work. However, not all teachers provide enough opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects, such as geography or history.
- The school has developed its teaching of mathematics in line with the requirements of the new national curriculum. There is a strong focus on using the skills they have learnt to solve problems and explain their reasoning. As a result, pupils are now making better progress. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that there are enough opportunities for pupils to apply and use these skills in other subjects such as science.
- There is a whole-school policy on marking which all teachers follow. Pupils' work is marked regularly but teachers do not always give guidance that is precise enough to enable pupils to improve their work as well as they could.
- Teachers generally plan lessons that develop the skills that pupils need to develop. However, there are occasions when the tasks set for the most-able pupils are too easy and this slows their progress.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement has improved since the last inspection and standards are rising because the school has taken effective action to increase the rate of pupils' progress. In 2014, by the end of Year 6, pupils had reached broadly average standards in reading and mathematics, and below average standards in writing. Pupils' work, school data and lesson observations indicate that current pupils are making at least the expected progress in all year groups and that attainment by the end of Year 6 will be higher, particularly in writing and reading.
- Pupils are now achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics, with most currently working at standards close to or above the national average. The school has placed a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils are secure in the basic skills in English and mathematics, and this has led to a significant improvement in pupils' progress. The school continues to monitor progress closely across all classes and undertakes checks on pupils' work to ensure that the school makes accurate judgements about its work.
- Although there are gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils in school, the school spends the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- In the 2014 Year 6 national tests, disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind other pupils at the school in reading, writing and mathematics. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally was three terms in reading, writing and mathematics. The additional support that the school has put in place over the past two years has resulted in a narrowing of the gaps in attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at the school. Disadvantaged pupils are now making progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve as least as well as other pupils in school. This shows the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with other pupils across the school. This is because their needs are identified early and additional one-to-one or small-group support is provided to help them catch up with the others. The school monitors their progress closely and, where necessary, provides further help
- The standards reached by the most-able pupils in 2014 were below average, with too few achieving the highest levels of attainment. However, more-able pupils are now making much faster rates of progress and evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that their attainment will be significantly above that of previous years. This is due to additional support and a greater awareness by all staff of their potential. However, the tasks that they undertake in a few lessons are still not sufficiently demanding.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104230
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	462541

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Tonks
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Anthony Orlik
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 720921
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