

Blenheim Primary School

Lofthouse Place, Leeds, LS2 9EX

Inspection dates 23–24 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Senior leaders, governors and staff have been successful in creating a caring and harmonious school ethos which has the welfare of all pupils at its heart.
- Relationships throughout the school are highly collaborative and a strong sense of teamwork is evident. Together, this effective team face and surmount the challenges set them by the high levels of pupils joining and leaving the school outside normal times. As a result, pupils currently in the school make good progress and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Lessons engage pupils in their learning.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils new to speaking English and disadvantaged pupils is good. Specialist staff are expert at meeting the needs of these pupils across the school.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught well and make good progress in all areas.
- Pupils' positive attitudes make a good contribution to their learning. They behave well in the classroom and around the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is diligent, thorough and effective. Pupils feel safe in school and say they have no concerns about bullying. Pupils have no doubts that they can talk to staff if they have any problems.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with a variety of good opportunities for learning about different subjects and the wider world,
- The school has developed a very strong set of values. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Members of the governing body know the school well and have contributed to its continuing success. They hold school leaders to account and set them ambitious targets to make sure that teaching becomes even better, and that pupils make even faster progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, there is insufficient challenge for the most-able pupils.
- In a small number of classes, spoken language is not promoted rigorously.
- Some pupils have too few opportunities for writing in other subjects.
- Some teachers do not always make effective use of assessment in lessons to move learning on rapidly, particularly for the most able.
- The presentation of pupils' work is too variable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited several lessons or parts of lessons. They looked at a range of pupils' work and heard a number of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors also met the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. They also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupils' progress and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed playtimes, assemblies and lunch breaks. Displays around school and also in classrooms were noted.
- Inspectors met informally with a small number of parents at the beginning of the school day. They took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the results of a parent questionnaire carried out by the school.
- The views of staff and pupils were also considered.

Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector
Lynda Florence	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Blenheim is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Nursery offers part-time and full-time places. Reception-aged children attend on a full-time basis.
- Pupils are from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Over 40 different languages are spoken in the school. The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language, a much higher proportion than average. An increasing proportion of pupils speak little or no English when they start at the school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is above that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding that schools receive to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than the normal starting point is exceptionally high.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is part of the Lantern Learning Trust (Leeds).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - responding more quickly to pupils' learning so work is adapted promptly within lessons and continues to challenge all children and pupils, particularly the most able
 - making the best of every opportunity to develop pupils' language skills
 - providing more opportunities for writing at length in subjects across the curriculum
 - encouraging pupils to present their work neatly and carefully.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- There is a strong commitment by all leaders, including governors, and staff to strive for excellence. Together they have ensured that there has been acceleration in the school's improvement since the previous inspection. They have made sure that the school is a harmonious and well-ordered community, where good teaching and behaviour, and positive relationships, are the norm.
 - Leaders' successful measures to maintain and improve upon the good quality of teaching have resulted in improvements in the achievement of pupils currently in the school.
 - Middle leaders who have particular responsibilities are knowledgeable and keen to raise pupils' achievement, and to promote their well-being. They are involved in the checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and support their colleagues well in developing their practice to ensure that pupils make good progress.
 - Leaders set demanding targets for teachers in terms of raising pupils' achievement, including those who are supported by extra funding. They make sure that teachers receive the support they need to improve their practice by, for example, providing them with coaching or enabling them to attend appropriate courses. Teachers spoke warmly of the support and encouragement they had received from their colleagues, as well as from senior leaders. The headteacher also ensures that any pay increases are linked to teachers' success in meeting their targets.
 - Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum, which enables them to make good progress in academic and other subjects and also enhances their personal development. Reading and mathematics are promoted well through other subjects. However, leaders have not yet fully ensured that all teachers take every opportunity to promote talking and writing outside of English lessons.
 - Pupils learn to understand and appreciate the many different cultures and traditions, including different religious beliefs, that co-exist in the school. This is endorsed by the pupils themselves who are very proud of the high levels of respect and tolerance that exist between all members of the school community.
 - Pupils benefit from taking part in special events, visits and out-of-school activities. They learn the importance of respect for others' views and of democratic decision-making through, for example, participation in their very effective and active school council. The strong promotion of all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in them being very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
 - Leaders promote equality of opportunity and any form of discrimination is not tolerated. They make sure that the additional funding which the school receives to promote the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is used well. This extra money has enabled the school to close or narrow gaps in attainment for eligible pupils.
 - The school has made good use of the sport funding provided to increase pupils' participation in physical activity and to improve their skills. It has done this by employing specialist coaches to work alongside teachers and to run after-school or lunchtime clubs. The school is now able to ensure that all pupils learn to swim. The school has received very positive feedback from pupils and parents about how much the additional activities have been enjoyed.
 - The local authority provides effective training and support to both the school and the governing body. The school has also developed beneficial collaborative partnerships with other schools in Leeds through the Lantern Learning Trust.
 - The large majority of parents, including those who spoke to inspectors or completed the school's own questionnaire, as well as those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, report favourably about the way the school responds to any concerns they may have. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and the progress their children make.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and meet government requirements. Partnerships with outside agencies are strong and ensure that vulnerable pupils are given the support they need in order to enjoy school and achieve well.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are aware of how well the pupils are achieving compared to other pupils nationally and of the quality of teaching throughout the school. This is because they carefully examine the headteacher's reports and also visit the school. They are skilled and knowledgeable in analysing data about the school and attend training to improve their ability to hold the school to account. Governors fully support the school's systems for ensuring that pay increases for teachers are closely related to their performance, especially in relation to raising pupils' achievement. They know what the school would do to tackle any

underperformance. Governors make sure that the school's resources, including additional funding given for specific purposes, are used well for pupils' benefit. They also ensure that the school's procedures for safeguarding are fit for purpose.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They are very willing to talk about their school. Many pupils spoke of how much they look forward to coming to school and used words such as, 'caring', 'loving', 'welcoming', and 'respectful' to describe it. They are particularly proud to be part of the 'school family'.
- Pupils respond well to school leaders' and teachers' high expectations of them in terms of behaviour. Pupils' positive and cooperative attitudes enhance their learning and enable lessons to proceed smoothly and this contributes well to their progress. Inappropriate behaviour is rare. The school works effectively with individual pupils who occasionally struggle to manage their own behaviour.
- Around the school, pupils behave considerately towards others. They consistently follow well-rehearsed routines, which make for a calm and harmonious atmosphere. Playtimes are active, social occasions. The playground has a good range of equipment for pupils to enjoy.
- Pupils willingly take on a range of responsibilities around the school for the benefit of all. For example, members of the school council are involved in fundraising and consult with their classes on how the money should be spent. A willow tunnel and wet playtime toys were provided in this way. Others volunteer to carry out various tasks such as helping in the playground or in assembly. Pupils take good care of the school's environment.
- Overall, attendance is below the national average but this is not related to pupils' enjoyment of school. Extended leave to pupils' countries of origin remains an issue. A significant proportion of parents are international students at the universities in Leeds and return home, taking their children with them, at the end of university terms. These do not coincide with the start or end of school terms. As a result, attendance rates fall at the end of terms.
- Class-by-class, attendance varies. In some classes, it is above the national average. The school does everything it can to promote good attendance and is extremely rigorous in following up absence. Staff are exceptionally vigilant in ensuring the whereabouts of pupils who are absent from school at short notice.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The very attractive site is looked after well to ensure that pupils are as safe outside as they are inside.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. A very large majority of their parents agree that this is the case, and that the school looks after their children well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example when using the internet.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as persistent unkindness and name-calling. They report that they have no concerns about bullying because they have absolute confidence in staff to deal swiftly and effectively with any worries they may have.
- Visitors to the school, such as the police, promote personal safety and all pupils are taught to swim.
- The school's policies to protect and keep children safe are reviewed regularly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, including in the early years, is good. There are instances where it is especially strong and the school provides opportunities for staff to benefit from the best practice of their colleagues.
- The school's focus on maintaining and improving teaching has been strong. It is good across a range of subjects and in all key stages. This good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Pupils say that one of the best things about the school is the support they receive, especially when they do not understand what to do. They say that their teachers always have time to help and never 'let you give up'.
- Pupils make the most rapid progress when work is carefully matched to their individual needs and expectations are high. Teachers make effective links between subjects. For example, in one lesson pupils

described feelings and emotions in relation to their topic on dinosaurs. However, occasionally teachers do not always check pupils' learning in lessons often enough to make sure that they move pupils on rapidly once they have mastered a task. When this occurs, learning lacks sufficient challenge and a small number of pupils, particularly the most able, do not achieve as well as they might.

- Teachers work closely with their teaching assistants and use them effectively. Teaching assistants are well informed and often lead specific programmes of support, which are having a very positive impact. As a result, they are making a difference to the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs by helping them to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Valuable support is provided in small groups for those pupils who are new to speaking English. However, occasionally in class, there are missed opportunities to reinforce the spoken word. Highly effective support is also on hand to increase pupils' personal, social and emotional development.
- Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly and accurately. They ensure that pupils understand how to improve their work by providing 'next steps'. Most pupils regularly act upon teachers' comments by correcting or extending what they have written.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. Those heard to read by inspectors shared a love of books and eagerly discussed their favourite books and authors. They were able to explain clearly how the school had helped them become better readers. Pupils described a range of approaches that they would use such as 'sounding out' and 'breaking the word up' when coming across an unknown word. There is a wide range of good-quality reading materials throughout the school.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) has improved and this is having an impact upon achievement in writing. Pupils are given opportunities to write for different purposes and visits provide a range of first-hand experiences to inspire them to write. However, the development of writing skills in other subjects is sometimes limited.
- Many pupils in school have developed a clear, legible style of handwriting and the presentation of work is of a high quality. However, this is not consistent across the school and sometimes reference to presentation is overlooked in marking.
- The teaching of mathematics is also good. Pupils benefit from the good subject knowledge of staff and opportunities they provide to build on prior learning. For example, in one class pupils were calculating the area of compound shapes using their knowledge of the area of rectangles and right-angled triangles. Misconceptions were picked up quickly by the teacher and addressed. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to discuss their work with others.
- Attractive displays of pupils' work along corridors and in classrooms celebrate pupils' achievements and show that their efforts are valued.

The achievement of pupils is good

- An exceptionally high number of pupils start school at different times of the school year and some leave again after relatively short periods of time. As a result, class groups are constantly changing and only a small proportion of pupils remain in school from early years, or from Key Stage 1, until the end of Year 6. This means that published data do not give an accurate picture of pupils' achievement. In addition, an increasing number of pupils arrive with little or no knowledge of the English language and some have never been to school before. Therefore, starting points are below what is typical for their age.
- The school's tracking of pupils' achievements is rigorous. It not only follows the progress of those pupils who have been in school longest, which it refers to as its 'retained' pupils, but it also keeps track of the progress of individuals who have not been in school for sustained periods of time. This system, supported by other evidence gathered by inspectors during the inspection, shows that, from their individual starting points, pupils make good progress during their time in school. Those pupils who have been in school the longest achieve results that are similar to or above national averages.
- In 2014, the results of the national screening check for phonics of all Year 1 pupils were well below the national average. The most recent results, while still below the national average, show a considerable improvement.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 vary year-on-year according to the early years experiences of pupils. In 2014, published results showed that standards were below the national average in reading, writing, and mathematics. Current data show an improvement in all areas, making attainment similar to national averages. Standards at the higher levels have also improved.
- In 2014, the results of the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 show that attainment in reading and mathematics was above the national average and was average in writing. However, only six pupils took the tests. The current Year 6 is a much larger group of pupils. School data show that this group of pupils

is also reaching above expected standards for their age in reading and mathematics.

- The most-able pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, their attainment in reading at the higher levels in Key Stage 1 and in writing in Key Stage 2 was below average last year, because they are not always sufficiently challenged to make the best possible progress. The school's most recent information shows that the targeted and additional support that the most-able pupils are receiving is having a positive impact on the progress they make.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs varies from class to class, as does the complexity of their needs. The school quickly identifies individual needs and provides good support that is carefully monitored for its effectiveness. From their starting points, these pupils make similar good progress like their classmates.
- The needs of the many pupils who join the school at different times of the school year are well met. They settle quickly and are incorporated into classes quickly and sensitively. The acquisition of language for those pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. They catch up quickly and achieve well.
- In 2014, most of the six pupils who took the tests in the Year 6 class were disadvantaged, so meaningful comparisons between their achievement and non-disadvantaged pupils in the school and nationally are impossible to draw. School data show that, currently, actions introduced by leaders are narrowing any gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.
- Throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils make good progress and attain at least as well as, and in some cases better than, their peers.
- Good teaching is having a significant impact on achievement throughout the school. Work in pupils' books and the school's own assessment records show that progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all classes is continuing to improve with the vast majority of pupils now making at least good progress from their different starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children achieve well during their time in the early years. From varying starting points, which are often below what is typical for their age, they all make good progress and are prepared well for Year 1. Good links between classes ensure that the moves from one class to the next are smooth. Not all children who start in early years move into Key Stage 1 and those who do are often joined by children from other settings or who have not yet been to school.
- Effective leadership and good teaching secure good achievement for children in the early years. All staff work together as an efficient team. They provide a bright and stimulating place in which children thrive. They keep a close check on children's progress and take prompt action if any child gives cause for concern. Staff identify the learning needs of groups of children including the disabled and those who have special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and children who are at the early stages of learning English. However, assessments are not sufficiently well used to ensure the needs of the most-able children are always met.
- Routines are quickly established, so children understand the standards of behaviour expected of them. They learn to listen to one another respectfully and all are encouraged to tend to their own needs, such as finding their own name on arrival. This encourages the sharing of responsibilities and learning to be independent. All this takes place in a warm and caring atmosphere where children are treated as individuals. They receive lots of praise and encouragement and this raises children's self-esteem and confidence. As a result, they behave well.
- The early years provides a wide variety of learning experiences. Adults interact well with children and look for ways in which to extend children's skills. As many children are new to English or speak English as an additional language, there is an appropriate focus on developing their skills in communication, reading and writing. However, there is scope to develop this further. Good use is made of the outdoor area. However, occasionally there is less focus on reading, writing and mathematics than indoors.
- Good relationships with parents and the sharing of information are quickly established. Parents are welcomed into the classrooms. This gives staff the opportunity to talk to parents and children the chance to share their work and experience pride in their achievements. Information sessions to help parents support their child's learning are well attended.
- Staff have a high regard for children's safety and ensure they are safe at all times.

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	107884
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	461880

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Humphries
Headteacher	Mo Duffy
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2012
Telephone number	0113 293 0808
Fax number	0113 293 7666
Email address	office@blenheimprimaryschool.com

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