

# Blakeney Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wiveton Road, Blakeney, Holt, Norfolk NR25 7NJ

## Inspection dates

22–23 September 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The high aspirations and dedication of the executive headteacher are shared by staff and governors. This has led to teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' behaviour and pupils' progress having improved across the school.
- Senior leaders and governors now have an in-depth knowledge of the school's strengths and the areas needing further work. The school is in a strong position to move further forward.
- The governors have a wide range of skills and experience. They know the school well and offer a good balance of both challenge and support.
- Links within the federation have provided additional capacity for school improvement. Staff have benefited from a wide range of training and support.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Leaders provide effective support for teachers to improve their practice.
- Behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons. Attendance has risen to above national figures, and pupils show positive attitudes to learning.
- Most pupils make good progress in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There has been a significant improvement in the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the national phonics screening check.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points.
- Early years children achieve well. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school's caring ethos makes pupils feel safe and valued. Teachers know the pupils well as individuals. New pupils are made welcome and settle into school routines very quickly.
- All the parents who stated a view are fully supportive of this friendly, inclusive school and would recommend it to other parents.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to help them achieve to their full potential.
- Pupils do not benefit as well as they could from applying their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum to improve their learning further.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding across the school so that all pupils make rapid progress to ensure a rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics by providing:
  - work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, especially the most able
  - more opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum to further improve their writing skills
  - more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects and in real-life contexts to further deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher provides highly skilled leadership. She is well supported by the new deputy headteacher. Their determination to improve the school has inspired the staff and governors to improve all aspects of the school. Staff across the federation work well together. This gives the school a greater capacity for further improvement.
- Pupils in this small, inclusive school now show good attitudes to learning which are supporting their improving progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently throughout lessons to enable them to make the best possible progress.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly. Leaders have an honest and accurate view of the school's priorities. School development plans are realistic and sharply focused on improving teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes.
- New assessment systems are understood by staff and are effectively monitored by senior leaders. As a result, staff confidently use the new measures to accurately assess the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils. This good progress is seen in pupils' English and mathematics books. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils benefit fully from applying their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum to improve their learning further.
- Effective systems are in place to assess the performance of teachers. These ensure that teachers and leaders are held to account for the progress pupils make in their class and within their roles of responsibility. Staff performance is managed appropriately and professional development is well planned for across the federation. Staff feel highly valued and supported.
- Equal opportunities are promoted well. Good relationships are promoted, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the curriculum and assemblies. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education and for life in modern Britain. Pupils are aware of other cultures and different ways of life. During an assembly, for example, pupils linked one of the school's aims, 'playing our part', to positive thinking. They focused on the principle of 'Yes I can', learning well from the great efforts shown by Paralympic athletes and their support teams.
- The stimulating curriculum ensures that activities interest pupils and staff. Learning is enhanced by trips, visitors and extra-curricular sports clubs, which help to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills. Key stage 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their visit to a local wind farm during the inspection which resulted in high-quality discussion involving environmental concerns.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively, clearly linked to improving the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils. These pupils now make similar progress to that of others across the school.

- The special educational needs leader ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well from their various starting points. Any underachievement is identified quickly and effective additional support is put in place to address the pupils' personal, social, emotional, behavioural and academic needs.
- The physical education and sport grant is used effectively to develop teachers' skills and increase pupils' participation in a range of sporting opportunities within and outside school time.
- The local authority has supported leaders and staff well to improve all aspects of the school since the last inspection.
- The school has established strong links with parents. Parental responses from Parent View, and from those who spoke to the inspector, show that parents hold the school in the highest regard. All parents would recommend Blakeney School to others.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective.
- Governors know the school well. They monitor the actions in the school improvement plan to ensure that pupils' outcomes, and teaching, learning and assessment are improving. They also visit the school regularly to check these improvements for themselves.
- Governors provide a wide range of skills and expertise to support and challenge the school's leaders. They look closely at how performance management is used to improve teaching. They make sure that any underachievement is tackled appropriately. They ensure that teachers' pay awards comply with the school's policy for performance management, being closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers meeting their targets.
- Governors ensure that the physical education and sport grant is used well to bolster pupils' skills and physical health, and that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used appropriately to improve their rates of progress. Governors are becoming more confident in analysing pupils' performance through the school's new assessment systems.
- Governors ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met, especially those related to safeguarding.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, staff and governors have established a clear culture of safeguarding in the school.
- School leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff and governors have all the information they need to provide effective support for all pupils. Staff have developed good relationships with parents and external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are well cared for.
- Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date. The safeguarding governor checks safeguarding practices and the single central register regularly.
- Staff implement risk assessments effectively. This was seen when they followed the correct procedures for a visit to a local wind farm, and used the plantation area and a local field for outdoor sporting activities.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school, including in the early years, are now good. Leaders provide good-quality support for teachers, to help them to improve their skills.
- Teachers know pupils well as individuals. This helps to build positive relationships. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and try their best. This contributes well to pupils' improving progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils understand what they are learning about because teachers give clear explanations. This enables them to start work quickly and confidently. Pupils receive regular and helpful written and verbal feedback from teachers which helps them to understand what they must do to improve further.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan learning activities which meet the needs of the various year groups and abilities in both of the mixed-age classes. Occasionally, in a few lessons, some pupils, particularly the most able, are not challenged sufficiently throughout the lesson to ensure that they make the best possible progress.
- Staff are becoming more confident and accurate in using the school's new assessment systems. Analysis of pupils' performance is enabling teachers to fill the gaps in pupils' learning due to previous weaker teaching.
- Teachers and teaching assistants give effective targeted support to disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This successfully reinforces pupils' skills and enables them to catch up with other pupils.
- Teaching and learning are improving across the curriculum, supported by the school's strategies to improve pupils' attitudes to learning. Key stage 2 pupils show high-quality rugby ball-handling skills when working with the sports coaches. At the same time, the class teacher was able to develop her physical education teaching skills. Early years children and key stage 1 pupils listened to instructions, so that they could keep a steady beat and use appropriate vocabulary when playing percussion instruments.
- Pupils talk positively about their regularly set homework which complements and expands classwork.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils read with confidence and fluency. Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics to support their reading of new words. The teaching and learning of phonics are improving rapidly. Teachers and teaching assistants provide focused support for the differing abilities of pupils across the school, which is meeting the needs of individual pupils very well. As a result, pupils confidently use their phonics skills to support their reading, writing and spelling.
- Pupils' books show that they are making good progress in their English skills and there are some good cross-curricular links. Key stage 2 pupils produced good-quality fact sheets with appropriate technical vocabulary after their visit to see the wind turbines. Key stage 1 pupils recorded information about castles and knights. However, across the school there are too few opportunities to write at length in other subjects to improve pupils' skills further.

- Teachers explain mathematical concepts clearly to support pupils' learning. They use practical activities and mathematical resources to enhance this learning. Key stage 2 pupils work enthusiastically, whether in small groups or as a whole class, to order three-, four- and five-digit numbers. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils use mathematical resources to expand their skills in 'counting on'. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding and extend their skills through real-life contexts and in other subjects.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know pupils and their families well in this welcoming and caring school. Pupils joining part-way through the year settle in quickly and make friends easily. Parents of some of these pupils who spoke to the inspector were very positive about their child's transition to Blakeney School.
- Staff get to know each pupil as an individual. This enables tailored support for the small number of pupils who have additional requirements so that their personal, social, emotional and behavioural needs are met effectively.
- Year 5 and Year 6 pupils attend a residential with fellow peers across the schools in the federation. This helps them to boost their confidence and make new friends, some of whom they may meet again at secondary school. Parents of former pupils and Year 6 pupils acknowledge that the school prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are confident that they feel safe in school. The school's work to raise pupils' awareness of safety through the curriculum is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as near water and electricity, and when using the internet. They feel happy to talk to adults in school about any concerns. The pupils also have a good understanding of the different types of bullying.
- All parents who responded to Parent View or spoke to the inspector agreed that their children feel safe and happy at school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's work on effective behaviour and learning strategies has helped to improve pupils' attitudes to learning. This in turn has supported pupils' progress because the pupils want to learn and succeed. Pupils understand the school's expectations of behaviour, so interruptions in lessons are uncommon. The few behavioural incidents are dealt with and logged effectively.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms, around the school and when they are off site. For example, pupils showed similar good behaviour at morning break on the school playground and during lunchtime play in the off-site plantation area. Here, they have a wonderful time making dens, playing on the wooden climbing equipment and searching for mini-beasts and frogs.

- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. This is confirmed by school records. Pupils understand the difference between merely falling out with each other and bullying.
- Pupils care for each other. They work well together and show respect and tolerance towards each other. Pupils enjoy their roles of responsibility, and older pupils support younger pupils well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud of their school. This has helped attendance to rise above the national average. Few pupils are persistently absent.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- The school's assessment systems and pupils' books indicate that pupils across the school are now making good progress from their various starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection.
- Results at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 have varied since the last inspection due to the small numbers in each year group. In 2015 standards were low for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, improved teaching is helping the pupils to fill in the gaps in their learning, which occurred due to weaker teaching in the past.
- The 2016 key stage 1 and key stage 2 results based on the new assessment criteria cannot be meaningfully compared with the 2015 figures. The school's performance data indicates that most pupils are now making good progress from their starting points.
- The very few most able pupils are making good progress overall across the curriculum. However, occasionally, the challenges provided for them vary during a lesson. This means that some of the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school acknowledges that this can be the case and the progress of the most able pupils forms a priority on the 2016/17 school improvement plan.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities now make good progress similar to that of their peers. They receive good support in school because their needs are identified quickly and addressed effectively.
- Phonics teaching has improved rapidly and phonics is now taught well across the school. In 2016, all of the Year 1 pupils who had attended the school during the Reception Year achieved the expected standard in the national phonics screening check. Current teaching indicates that this improvement in the Year 1 phonics results is sustainable.
- The improving teaching and learning across the school are supporting pupils' transition to the next stage of their education.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leaders have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the early years provision. The combined early years and key stage 1 classroom provides a stimulating learning environment. The teacher and teaching assistants have ensured that within a few weeks the early years children have settled into school routines quickly and confidently.
- Children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are usually typical for their age, but this can vary due to the small numbers of children in the early years. Well-planned provision and effective teaching enable the children to make good progress from their starting points. Most children now achieve a good level of development. As the children mix with key stage 1 pupils in their shared classroom, they are socially and academically well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The provision for outdoor learning has improved since the last inspection. Outdoor activities are planned to provide opportunities for children to explore ideas for themselves. This was seen after a structured mathematics session led by the teacher on counting and number recognition. The Reception children enthusiastically and independently counted out their magic beans when planting them in the soil to grow Jack's beanstalk.
- The early years staff are skilled in identifying where additional help is required for disadvantaged children or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they achieve well from their starting points.
- Teaching is typically good. Early numeracy and literacy skills, including daily phonics skills, are taught well. Children also have the opportunity to listen to and observe the learning of the older pupils within the class.
- Effective systems for assessing children's learning are in place. The children's individual learning journeys and literacy and mathematics books show that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Children take turns and share equipment. They behave well and play cooperatively together. They are keen to help their friends.
- The early years leader for the federation has supported the early years teacher and teaching assistants effectively to improve their skills to support the children's learning further.
- Parents are fully supportive of the early years provision. They praised the early years staff for giving their children a welcoming start, and ensuring that they settled in very quickly to school life. Parents valued the transition events in the summer term.
- Safeguarding requirements are highly effective. Conscientious staff ensure that the children are well cared for at all times.



## School details

Unique reference number	121108
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10011843

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	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Burrows
Headteacher	Mary Dolan
Telephone number	01263 740531
Website	<a href="http://www.blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk">www.blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk">office@blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average.
- Early years provision is full time for children in the Reception Year.
- There are too few Year 6 pupils to make a statement about whether the school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

- There have been a number of new appointments to teaching and leadership posts since the last inspection.
- The school is organised into two classes. One provides for Reception-aged children and Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The other includes pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The school is part of the Pilgrim Federation which includes three other local schools.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in seven lessons and attended an assembly. Five observations were carried out jointly with either the executive headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with governors, a representative of the local authority and school staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and safety, the monitoring of teaching and management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. The inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- The inspector took account of 16 responses to Parent View and spoke with parents informally at the beginning of the school day. The questionnaires completed by 10 members of staff were also considered.

## Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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