

# John Blandy Primary School

Laurel Drive, Southmoor, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 5DJ

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Senior leaders have strong ambitions and a clear vision for the school. The headteacher has gained the trust of staff and governors and established a strong team spirit. Staff morale is high.
- Leadership is effective. Governors carry out their roles well. Senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. The quality of teaching and learning has improved due to robust challenge from senior leaders and focused training for staff.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged and vulnerable ones, are making good progress in their learning. Phonics teaching is strong and pupils read well and regularly. They have good opportunities to develop their writing and their skills in mathematics.
- Teachers have established good relationships with pupils. Pupils enjoy learning and listen to their teachers.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They are polite and respectful and show consideration for others. The school promotes regular attendance effectively and attendance is above average.
- The well-designed curriculum gives pupils a wide range of experiences that support their learning well.
- Pupils are kept safe at school. Staff understand the safeguarding procedures and are vigilant. They care greatly about the welfare of pupils.
- Children settle into Reception quickly and make sustained progress in all areas of learning. The inside area is an exciting learning environment and engages children well. The outside area is underdeveloped and does not support children's learning as well as it might.
- Sometimes pupils do not receive clear enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants generally support pupils effectively in their learning, but they are not always deployed appropriately.
- The most able pupils could make better progress in English and mathematics. The activities planned for them are sometimes too easy.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for the most able pupils to tackle harder tasks.
- Improve leadership by ensuring the work of teaching assistants and the impact it has on the progress made by supported pupils are monitored effectively.
- Enhance provision in the early years by further developing the outside area so that activities and resources there are as effective in supporting children's learning as they are inside.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- John Blandy Primary School is a calm, well-ordered and happy place. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school and a strong determination to build upon improvements already made.
- The headteacher has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She has gained the confidence of staff and governors and is implementing effective plans to further improve the quality of teaching and learning. Staff morale is high and they work well as a team.
- Senior leaders use a wide range of evidence, including the progress pupils make and the quality of their written work, to evaluate each teacher's performance accurately. Teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement and senior leaders take decisive action to support and challenge any teacher whose performance is not good enough. Pupils' progress is followed closely and effective extra support is put in place for any pupils in danger of falling behind. The system to monitor how well teaching assistants are deployed and the impact they have on pupils' progress is not as rigorous, so the effectiveness of their work is variable.
- The school provides an effective range of training opportunities for subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Training is rightly focused on the school's identified needs and teachers' own aspirations. For example, some teaching assistants have completed training courses about autism and colleagues from a special school have provided advice and guidance to staff.
- School leaders value the regular support and challenge they receive from the trust advisers. They benefit from the 'health check' visits and advice from the headteacher of an outstanding school in the trust.
- The school offers a broad and exciting curriculum. Displays around the school and records in class year-books show pupils have a wide range of experiences that support their learning well. There is a suitable emphasis on English and mathematics. Topics are designed thoughtfully to incorporate a range of subjects and build on what pupils already know and their own ideas. Science, music and art are well represented. Trips and school events enhance topics well, enthusing pupils and stimulating their curiosity. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 clearly remembered what they had learned from their visit to a second world war spy training camp and dressing as evacuees during the 'Britain at War' topic.
- Primary sports funding is spent effectively to provide a wide range of sports clubs and activities. Numbers of pupils attending clubs are high. Pupils enjoy a number of sporting competitions between schools. Pupils spoke proudly of their team winning a recent cross-country event. Having specialist sports coaches has enabled teachers to improve their own coaching skills.
- Further clubs, such as for cooking, chess and guitar and to boost performance in mathematics, enrich pupils' experiences well. Older pupils have free access to Saturday School at a secondary school within the trust, for activities such as photography, computing, fencing and first aid.

- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, pupils learn about cultures and religions, such as Christianity, Sikh weddings and the Hindu festival of Diwali. Eight core values, including unity, respect and honesty, permeate the life of the school and contribute strongly to its friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Fundamental British values are implicit in the school's values system and pupils are being well prepared to become responsible citizens in modern Britain.
- The school is committed to equality of opportunity and ensures there is no discrimination. For example, leaders have recognised young carers as a group of potentially vulnerable pupils and provide good extra support for them.
- The school works hard to engage with parents. Regular newsletters provide good information about pupils' activities and Friday celebration assemblies are well attended by parents. Parents spoken to stated they were kept well informed and that school staff were very approachable.
- Some teachers make good use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. However, leaders do not check the way teaching assistants are deployed and the impact they have on pupils' learning robustly enough so they are not always used as effectively as they might be.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are passionate about making sure that their school continues to improve. They provide a good balance of strong support and robust challenge. Governors have a good range of relevant skills enhanced by up-to-date training in governance.
- Governors are constantly looking for more effective ways to carry out their roles. The governing body is well informed about the school's performance. They receive comprehensive reports from senior leaders and trust advisers, and make their own focused visits, which include talking to pupils. They ensure school leaders take action where teaching may be weaker and that teachers' movement up the pay scale is warranted.
- Governors make sure the pupil premium is helping disadvantaged pupils to make better progress and that the extra sports funding benefits pupils' health through more physical activity.
- Governors engage with parents well. For example, a good number of governors attend each school event to talk to parents and listen to their views.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Ensuring children are safe is central to the school's work. School leaders ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures are fully understood by staff. Staff and governors are well trained, including in the Prevent strategy.
- The site is secure and visitors are appropriately vetted. Safer recruitment strategies are used when filling vacancies. Staff receive regular updates, for example, at weekly staff

meetings, to ensure they remain vigilant.

- The designated safeguarding leads know about the safeguarding concerns in the local area and show strong determination in following up child protection issues with the local authority. The pastoral team maintain contact with hard-to-reach families so that, for example, the reasons for a pupil's absence are checked promptly.
- Parents were very positive about how the school keeps children safe. This was summed up well by one parent who said about her children, 'they feel safe, well looked after and have a great learning environment'.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- As a result of the school's focus on teaching practice and associated training, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' productivity and what they can achieve.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Classrooms are usually calm places with pupils engrossed in their work. Pupils feel secure enough to ask questions or ask for help. Generally, teachers provide tasks that interest pupils so that pupils settle to work easily and persevere at their tasks.
- Phonics is taught well. Teachers demonstrate strength in articulating sounds and how to produce them. Pupils rapidly learn how to link sounds and letters and use actions effectively to help sound out words. As a result, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard is above average in the annual phonics check in Year 1. Reading and writing are taught well. Teachers frequently check pupils' reading ability and ensure that reading books are closely matched to their ability. Pupils have regular reading comprehension activities at home and at school. Books are used to engage children in topics and reading has a high priority in the classroom.
- Pupils have good opportunities to write purposefully in a variety of styles and in all subject areas. Pupils write at length and in different forms. Teachers provide effective support in the form of writing frames to guide some pupils. There is an effective focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Teachers have good mathematics knowledge. They plan a number of interesting activities with different levels of challenge in mathematics. Concrete examples are used effectively to aid pupils' understanding, such as plastic analogue clocks that help pupils do calculations involving time. Pupils say that where teachers provide extension or testing questions after they have completed an exercise it helps them to understand any mistakes they have made.
- Pupils have good opportunities to study science and they enjoy the subject. Teachers provide a lot of practical activities that engage pupils well. Pupils learn how to plan and carry out meaningful scientific investigations, such as finding out how light travels, as well as scientific concepts like density.
- Teaching assistants are generally skilful in their roles. The extra support they give to pupils is usually effective in helping them to make more rapid progress and improving their confidence. They are particularly effective in supporting the few pupils who cannot manage their behaviour well. Teaching assistants are an important resource in supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who

speaking English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils. In addition, the school recognises another group of vulnerable pupils, young carers, and teaching assistants also provide good support for them.

- Teachers plan activities in detail taking into account pupils' prior learning. They have good subject knowledge. They provide clear explanations and instructions so that pupils understand what they have to do. Activities are often presented at different levels of challenge from which pupils can select. Questioning, to enhance understanding, is sometimes less effective for the most able pupils as they are not challenged enough in their thinking about their answers.
- Teachers follow the school's assessment policy. Although teachers spend a good deal of time marking pupils' written work, they do not always get a good return for their efforts. Some of their comments are not effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Teachers often praise what pupils have done well, but some teachers do not point out clearly what pupils should do next to improve.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils become confident and self-assured in the caring environment of the school. They can talk at length about their work and speak clearly when asking or answering questions in class. They have good opportunities for collaboration and develop strong social skills and moral values. They enjoy and have good attitudes to learning, which helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils are respectful and show consideration for others. Pupils spoken to explained that everyone is equal and worthy of respect, including those who look different or come from a different background. As one Year 3 pupil said, 'We have to treat everybody as we want to be treated.'
- Pupils learn to take on extra responsibilities. For example, peer mediators, trained in their roles, help to sort out minor disputes at breaktimes and play leaders organise games for groups of pupils. Peer mediators and play leaders are well respected by their schoolmates.
- Whether working or playing, pupils are well supervised in a secure site. They say they enjoy school, where they feel valued and safe. They have learned how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, they learn how to stay safe when using the internet or crossing the road, and know about healthy lifestyles.
- Bullying is often discussed. Pupils know the different forms it can take and what to do if they see or experience bullying. They stated that bullying was very rare and they were sure their teachers would sort out any incidents quickly and fairly if it did happen.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils know the school rules and the behaviour expected of them. They know their behaviour affects how well they do and, in the classroom, aim to stay on 'green' or ready to learn. Each class has generated its own classroom charter agreeing how pupils will behave.
- Pupils conduct themselves well as they move around the school and, in lessons, respond promptly to teachers' instructions. At breaktimes, pupils get along happily, showing consideration for one another. They respect the environment. For example, there is little litter evident and Year 6 pupils help to clear the hall at the end of lunchtime.
- Attendance slipped below average last year, coinciding with much higher numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school during that year. The school maintains a strong focus on regular attendance. Each week, a class and individual pupils are recognised for high attendance. The pastoral team engages well with hard-to-reach families and there is a rigorous system for parents to apply for authorised absence. Current attendance is running above average.
- Incidents of more serious misbehaviour are rare. Pupils report that sometimes lessons are undermined by a few pupils talking out of turn. When activities go on for too long, a few pupils can occasionally stop concentrating and be less attentive.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Information provided by the school shows that in all years pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Written work seen in pupils' books and speaking to them about their work confirmed the school's view. Children in Reception are making steady, sustained progress in meeting the early learning goals.
- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils in each cohort, either one or two, are effectively helped to make good progress. Teachers have analysed barriers to learning that they might have and planned strategies to overcome them. The school has a range of extra academic and pastoral support, including one-to-one and small group work. Where appropriate, help is given to purchase uniforms, go on trips and attend clubs, to ensure these pupils do well.
- The most able pupils, including ones who are disadvantaged, have good opportunities to work with similar pupils from other schools in the academy. They work together on more demanding projects led by teachers at the trust's secondary school. Teachers often plan a range of challenges for their classes, including harder ones, but sometimes the most able pupils spend too long on the easier tasks. Although they are making good progress, the most able pupils could do better.
- The school identifies the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities early. Class teachers are advised on in-class support to meet their needs and extra interventions by teaching assistants are planned to overcome learning difficulties. Case studies for individual pupils show this group is making good progress. However, the impact of different interventions on pupils' progress is not monitored well enough to ensure the most efficient deployment of teaching assistants.
- Through good teaching, pupils learn the necessary skills in phonics quickly. Their progress in reading is good. Pupils develop a love of reading and read regularly. Each

class has a class book linked to their current topic and frequent opportunities to read at school. They are encouraged to read different genres. For example, Year 6 pupils explained they read and reported on six different types of books each term. Several 'golden' tickets, linked to prizes, have been secreted in books in the library and there are several reading competitions throughout the year. Reception children have a book bag to take home to enjoy with their parents and there is a reading club at lunchtime to support weaker readers.

- Pupils spoken to said they enjoyed the writing tasks. They develop clear handwriting styles as they move through the school. Their writing is generally neat, tidy and well presented. Some of the most able pupils are capable writers showing maturity of structure, sensitivity and care in construction, but, overall, the most able pupils are not challenged enough. Generally, their progress is not as strong as others.
- Pupils find the activities planned for them in mathematics interesting and engaging. They are becoming fluent in arithmetic, developing good strategies for calculation and a good memory of number facts. Pupils complete activities and most present their work well. Pupils, particularly the most able, have fewer opportunities to explain their reasoning and work at greater depth.
- The attainment of current pupils' is broadly average across the school, except in Year 4, where it is lower due to a legacy of weaker teaching in the past.
- In 2016, a higher proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in phonics than nationally. Also, higher proportions of Year 2 pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportions reaching the higher level or working at greater depth was lower.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2016, Year 6 pupils had made average progress and reached standards similar to national figures in reading. Progress and attainment in writing and mathematics was not as good. Current pupils are making better progress in English and mathematics.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children make consistently strong progress in all areas of learning. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development has been around or above national figures for the last three years. Disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make as much progress as other children, or more.
- Children settle quickly into the welcoming and caring atmosphere of Reception. Leadership is very effective and adults are enthusiastic in their roles. Arrangements for children starting school are well organised and involve parents closely, for example, through 'stay and play' sessions.
- Adults know the children well and their teaching is skilful and effective. They take every opportunity to engage them in conversation and skilfully question them to make them think harder. For example, a boy filling a pot with soil for seeds was encouraged to think about the other things he might need to get the seeds to grow. Adults model language clearly and provide many opportunities for children to develop their writing skills and investigate numbers.



- Adults have high expectations of children's capabilities. They observe every child, accurately assess the next steps in learning they need and ensure activities are planned that build effectively on children's earlier learning. Children of all abilities are making good progress. Learning journals are comprehensive records of children's progress in Reception and include 'wow' moments, examples of achievements at home recorded by parents.
- Children show great confidence when working or playing with their classmates. They quickly learn how to do things for themselves and the behaviour expected of them. For example, at the end of the day, children tidy up with minimal guidance from adults.
- The inside area is bright and an exciting learning environment. It is full of examples of children's work and has a range of activity stations linked to the current theme of 'Space'. Children readily engage and persevere with their chosen activities. They quickly develop good social skills, for example, learning to share and take turns.
- In contrast, the outside area is underdeveloped. There are fewer references to numbers and writing and the resources are not organised in the same exciting manner as inside. The outside area does not offer as many learning opportunities as inside.

## School details

Unique reference number	140307
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10019826

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Jonathan Shorter
Headteacher	Clare Silvester
Telephone number	01865 820422
Website	<a href="http://www.johnblandyprimary.org.uk">www.johnblandyprimary.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office.3230@john-blandy.oxon.sch.uk">office.3230@john-blandy.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school. There is one class in each of Years 1 to 6 and a full-time Reception class.
- The majority of pupils are of White British origin. The remainder come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is small.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health

and care plan are around the national average.

- The school meets the government's 2015 floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school converted to academy status in 2013 and joined the Faringdon Academy of Schools.
- The headteacher returned to school in September 2016, following maternity leave which began in November 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a wide range of evidence during the inspection, which included observations of teaching, some of which were undertaken with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work in books across all year groups and subjects.
- Inspectors met with school staff, including the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff in charge of aspects of the school's work. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They spoke with five governors and the executive headteacher of the trust and its school improvement partner.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils during formal meetings and informally with pupils during lessons and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation related to the school's work, including its development plan, self-evaluation report, records of monitoring of teaching and learning, trust reports on the school's performance and information about pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Inspectors scrutinised records concerning safeguarding and toured the school site.
- Inspectors analysed the 35 responses and 25 written comments submitted to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, during the inspection. They also considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and five responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

James McVeigh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lynn Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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