

The Blake Church of England Primary School

Cogges Hill Road, Cogges, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 3FR

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2, especially for the most able pupils, have not been high enough for the past two years.
- In the past, leaders and governors had not evaluated the weaknesses and strengths of the school rigorously enough and, as a result, held an over-optimistic view of the school's performance.
- Recently introduced strategies to improve the quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessment have not had time to fully develop. Although teaching and assessment are improving, they are not yet securely good across the school.
- Teaching has not been consistently strong over time. Until recently, it has not ensured that all pupils do as well as they might and meet the standards of which they are capable.
- Provisional 2017 key stage 2 results show that this cohort of pupils made very slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, current pupils are making faster progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's good or better teaching is used to develop the practice of all teachers to improve pupils' learning across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving. The headteacher, senior leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust are moving the school forward.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. This provision is well led and managed. Teaching is good and children make strong progress from their starting points.
- Pupils participate in an extensive and rich curriculum. This motivates and engages pupils, and develops a good understanding of the world they live in.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and behave well. They offer visitors a warm welcome and are keen to engage in conversation.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - sharpening the judgements leaders make about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that evaluation is based on the impact on pupils' progress
 - raising the expectations of staff about what pupils can achieve, especially in mathematics and writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it results in strong progress from all pupils, by ensuring that staff:
 - effectively embed the new teaching approaches to improve English and mathematics outcomes
 - use assessment information to build effectively on what pupils already know
 - use the practice of the best teachers to improve teaching across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have been overly generous in their assessment of the quality of education provided by the school. As a result, they have not maintained the school's good overall effectiveness.
- Until recently, senior leaders and governors have not had an accurate view of the school's performance. Consequently, leaders have failed to address quickly enough falling standards and the decline in pupils' outcomes. Leaders have made changes to improve the quality of teaching and the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils. However, they do not routinely evaluate the impact of these strategies by checking if pupils' achievement improves.
- The structure of the leadership team has been reorganised to strengthen leadership at all levels. Aspects of the school, for example the early years, are well led and managed and this has had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes in this area.
- Recent changes to the school's monitoring and evaluation systems have given leaders a more accurate view of its performance. Early indications suggest that measures to improve teaching, learning and assessment, recently introduced by leaders, are having a positive effect, especially on the progress that current pupils are making.
- The leaders of English have a clear understanding of the actions required to further develop the subject and improve pupils' progress. As a result, they have implemented new teaching methods, evaluated the quality of teaching across the school and led training for staff.
- The newly formed mathematics team has introduced new methods of teaching and its members have attended training linked to the new curriculum. However, although they identified teachers' strong practice in some year groups, they have been slow in ensuring that this is shared across the school.
- The school's curriculum is rich and balanced. It provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences. They learn about a number of religions and take part in musical and theatrical performances.
- The school's biannual science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) week teaches pupils how their learning in STEM subjects is applied in the outside world. For example, a plumber visited school to show pupils how the central heating system works. Pupils make many visits and take part in residential weeks to extend their learning. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, such as art, choir, French and sports.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding is increasingly effective. Better-quality support and intervention are now in place. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are making rapid progress and diminishing the difference between themselves and other pupils.
- Strong leadership by the special educational needs coordinator has resulted in high-quality provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Their needs are identified early, and their progress, which is beginning to

improve, is tracked accurately. The funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, which is supplemented by the school, is used increasingly effectively by leaders.

- The school uses the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium effectively. The funding provides a specialist sports teacher to give high-quality tuition to pupils and training for staff. Pupils participate in a range of competitive and non-competitive sporting activities, including athletics, tag rugby and heptathlon. Pupils are actively encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and eat healthily.
- The multi-academy trust has an accurate view of the school. Support for leadership has been arranged through links within both the multi-academy trust and the local authority. The multi-academy trust has been able to support leaders' evaluations of the school's performance, and to provide them with the challenge needed.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Most parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, would recommend the school to others. One parent, representing the views of many, remarked, 'The school is a caring and accepting environment which generates enthusiasm for good learning practices.'

Governance of the school

- In the past, governors have not challenged leadership and management quickly enough over falling standards. Since the appointment of several new governors, who have a range of skills and expertise which they use well, challenge is far more apparent. For example, governors have recently questioned leaders over the slow rate of progress made by groups of pupils.
- Governors make appropriate checks on the school's safeguarding arrangements. They attend all relevant training to keep up to date with any changes in regulation. The designated safeguarding governor regularly interviews staff and pupils to ensure that the school's procedures are robust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. Every member of staff, including supervisory staff for lunchtime, understand their roles in relation to keeping pupils safe and child protection.
- All staff receive regular, appropriate training on safeguarding issues, including the government's 'Prevent' duty and around child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. When necessary, leaders ensure that referrals to external agencies are swift and thorough follow-up procedures are in place.
- There is a comprehensive system in place for staff to record any concern they may have about pupils' safety and welfare. All concerns are followed up and meticulous records of outcomes are kept.
- Pupils are safe in this school. Parents, pupils and staff agree that this is the case.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good. Where teaching is strong, teachers make the very best use of every available learning opportunity. They respond quickly to address pupils' misconceptions and provide further challenge to stretch pupils when appropriate. Where teaching is less effective, it does not engage pupils in their learning quickly enough and progress is slowed.
- Historically weak teaching has led to a focus on addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. For example, older pupils have to learn early multiplication tables before they are able to move on in their mathematics. This limits the outcomes that pupils achieve.
- Leaders have prioritised the teaching of mathematics as an area for whole-school development. Staff have received training in this area, however, this has not yet been accessed by all staff across the school. As a result, some inconsistencies in teaching remain, for example in teachers' subject knowledge including the correct use of mathematical terminology.
- A significant amount of work has been undertaken, this year, to improve the teaching of reading and writing. Evidence in workbooks shows that pupils are applying their writing skills across a wide range of curriculum areas. The introduction of high-quality texts, supported by effective input and challenge from adults, is also having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years and key stage 1. When listening to pupils read, it was clear that pupils use their phonics skills well when trying to decode unfamiliar words.
- Assessment procedures have developed significantly in the past four terms. Teachers now have access to systems that help them make more frequent and accurate judgements about pupils' achievement. Moderation by outside agencies, and through the inspection activities, confirms that teachers' assessments are accurate. However, this work is relatively new and more time is required to ensure that assessment systems are embedded effectively.
- Teachers are proud to work at the school and say they are well supported by leaders. Some teachers have a range of strong skills and expertise. However, leaders have not planned adequate opportunities for these teachers to share this good practice more widely across the school.
- Teachers set homework tasks to give pupils opportunities to consolidate their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Almost all parents, who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, believe that their child receives appropriate homework for their age.
- Teaching assistants work effectively alongside teachers and provide good support to individuals and small groups of pupils. Leaders ensure that teaching assistants are included in appropriate staff training. For example, they know how to deepen pupils' understanding through careful, probing questioning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors. Leaders have ensured that pupils who need additional support to help them to manage their own behaviour are well catered for.
- The school's core values are woven into the daily life of the school. This results in pupils having positive attitudes towards one another and adults, and this is evident in a wide variety of situations.
- Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying and how to keep themselves safe online. They say that there used to be incidents of bullying, but it is now a thing of the past. Pupils know how to report bullying, should it occur, and are confident that it would be dealt with effectively by adults in the school.
- The profile of healthy living and the benefits of exercise have been raised by the appointment of a 'Fit for Fun' coordinator. Pupils now participate in a range of both competitive and non-competitive activities throughout the year. Additionally, most pupils now take part in organised sports at lunchtime.
- Pupils regularly raise funds for overseas schools. They communicate with a school in Nigeria through videoconferencing, and also link with a school in Milton Keynes. These activities enable pupils to develop a good understanding of the wider world.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's strategies to promote good behaviour and conduct are effective. Teachers are quick to praise good behaviour. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They behave well in lessons and low-level disruption is rare. Pupils listen respectfully to staff and to each other.
- Well-established routines mean that pupils know what is expected, for example when moving from the classroom to the playground. However, one inspector noted some unchecked over-boisterous play at lunchtime.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils was below the national average in 2017, however, current records show that the attendance of this group of pupils is rising, and is now at least in line with pupils nationally.
- All members of staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire say that pupils' behaviour is good. They feel well supported by leaders in managing behaviour. Staff follow the school's procedures well.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, too few pupils achieved the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics national assessments at key stage 1 or key stage 2. As a result, too few pupils have been fully prepared for the next stage of their

education.

- Current pupils in some year groups are not yet making consistently strong progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Poor teaching in the past means some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. School information shows that many of these pupils are beginning to catch up but more needs to be achieved to improve outcomes for pupils.
- In mathematics, learning is not planned consistently well to enable pupils to make strong progress. For instance, the most able pupils are not routinely challenged to complete more demanding tasks that require them to think deeply. As a result, this group of pupils are not yet achieving as highly as they are capable.
- In the most recent key stage 2 national assessments, too few disadvantaged pupils, and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, made good progress. There was an improvement in progress in reading in 2017 for both these groups of pupils, however, they remained below the national average. Leaders are now providing additional targeted interventions to help these groups of pupils achieve more successfully. Evidence in pupils' books shows that they are currently making better progress from their respective starting points but gaps in their progress and attainment are not yet diminishing quickly enough.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening test was below that of other pupils nationally. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of Year 2 has been above the national average for the past three years. Current pupils are making good progress.
- In 2016, the proportion of Reception children achieving a good level of development was well above the national average. The 2017 assessment information shows that the proportion is now broadly in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the year is typically higher than that seen nationally. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning, in Year 1.
- The early years environment is vibrant and stimulating, with a wide range of activities set up from the start of the day. The classrooms and outdoor area provide well for all aspects of the early years curriculum.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. The early years leader has an accurate understanding of the strengths of the provision and is highly aware of areas for further development. For example, she acknowledges that the moderation of assessments across the two Reception classes needs to be more systematic than at present.
- Children are curious to learn and can stay focused for sustained periods of time. For example, a group of children choosing an activity to develop their addition skills became deeply engrossed in the activity, and worked with enthusiasm and purpose.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Adults are trained well. The physical

environment is safe and there are clear procedures in place to deal with any concerns. Consequently, children know how to learn and play safely.

- Clear classroom routines and high expectations of children's behaviour are evident. Children cooperate well with each other and treat other people with respect. Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good in the early years.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. Inspectors observed a session in which a 'talking frog' helped to engage the children in a highly interactive and well-crafted lesson. The children were inspired and this resulted in high-quality outcomes.
- Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision. They feel involved in their child's learning. They particularly appreciate being able to come into the classroom in the morning, and sit with their child while they settle and begin their morning tasks. They also value the opportunity to talk to the teacher during this time.

School details

Unique reference number	141840
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10037900

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Elizabeth Knowles
Headteacher	Mr Tim Edwards-Grundy
Telephone number	01993 702 840
Website	www.blake.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	Office.3600@blake.oxon.sch.uk
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 converted to become an academy within the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust, in March 2015.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2016. These set the

minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Children in the early years are taught in two Reception classes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons across a range of subjects. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including records of the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work in books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, representatives of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, members of the governing body and parents and carers.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils, as well as having informal conversations with pupils during lessons and at playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Inspectors considered 37 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and gathered the views of pupils through a recently commissioned survey.
- Inspectors took into account 118 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 93 free-text comments, and the views expressed at a meeting held at parental request.

Inspection team

Brian Macdonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Phillips	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Carr	Ofsted Inspector

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