

Blagdon Primary School

Bath Road, Blagdon, Bristol BS40 7RW

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is not effective. Leaders have not established effective systems for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. Safeguarding records are not fit for purpose.
- Governors do not fulfil their statutory duties to ensure that all policies are implemented successfully. Governors have not responded to external advice; they have not assured themselves of the quality of risk assessments that are in place.
- Leaders and governors have been too slow to implement priorities for improvement this year.
- Middle leaders do not receive sufficient training when they take up their roles. They do not use information they have of about pupils' progress to evaluate the impact of their actions.
- The arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) lack precision.
- There are too many inconsistencies in teaching for it to be good. Teaching does not provide pupils with the guidance they need to make good progress in their writing. Too many pupils are unsure how to edit and improve their work.
- Mathematics is not taught consistently well across key stage 2. There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply reasoning and problem solving. As a result, the progress of the most able pupils is restricted.
- The teaching of reading is not consistently strong in key stage 2, limiting pupils' understanding of what they read.
- The teaching of history and geography in key stage 2 is not developing pupils' skills at the level expected for their age.
- Teaching in the early years does not challenge the most able children. Consequently, they do not achieve well enough across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides teachers with pertinent advice on how to improve where teaching is weaker. As a result, staff morale is high, and teaching is improving.
- Governors' plans for the use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils are effective. These pupils make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are keen learners. They behave well in lessons and in their play.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school. The headteacher has gained their confidence.
- Pupils acquire phonics skills well because of good teaching.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders urgently improve safeguarding procedures and implement strategies to ensure that concerns about pupils' welfare are acted on promptly and effectively
 - governors' oversight of safeguarding arrangements is improved so that risks are evaluated, and the monitoring of safeguarding is effective
 - the policy for supporting pupils with medical needs is fit for purpose
 - there is an effective approach to identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with SEND
 - leaders and governors tackle school improvement planning in a timely and effective manner to make their intended improvements
 - the role of middle leaders, including the leader for early years, is strengthened by using information about pupils' progress to drive improvements to teaching
 - action is taken to establish consistently effective teaching of mathematics across key stage 2
 - professional development is tailored to ensure that leaders new in their role are well supported.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make stronger progress by:
 - developing pupils' reading comprehension effectively, particularly in key stage 2
 - developing pupils' skills in reasoning so that they can explain their mathematical thinking
 - giving pupils guidance on the expectations for their writing and strengthening their ability to edit and improve their work
 - ensuring that activities planned in history and geography in key stage 2 are appropriately challenging and build pupils' skills effectively.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching in early years so that children, particularly the most able, make strong progress by:
 - ensuring that staff use information from assessments to plan activities which challenge children to apply their learning and deepen their thinking across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not fulfilled their statutory duty to safeguard all pupils in school. The culture of safeguarding does not ensure that the welfare of the pupils is at the heart of all decisions. As a result, the quality of leadership and management, in this key aspect of the school's effectiveness, is inadequate.
- Leaders and governors have not made adequate plans to ensure cover for the headteacher when she is absent from school. When the inspection took place, safeguarding arrangements did not identify how this shortcoming in leadership cover would be overcome.
- There has been considerable and unavoidable turbulence in leadership over the past three years with interim leadership roles in place. Although the substantive leadership arrangements have only recently been established the headteacher and deputy headteacher are now beginning to improve the quality of education. Staff express confidence in the current leadership of the school and recognise the improvements being made.
- The headteacher's evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate. She has a clear handle on the improvements that are required. However, there is not yet an agreed strategy to implement these plans fully and therefore bring about the necessary improvement.
- Recent significant changes in the school's leadership team have resulted in staff taking on new leadership roles. While middle leaders are beginning to develop their roles not all have received the training they need to feel confident in leading improvement.
- Middle leaders do not use information about pupils' progress effectively to evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects and areas of responsibility. This limits their ability to show the impact of the actions or to plan and take good strategic decisions to improve teaching.
- Recent changes in staff have left the school without the management capacity to identify and secure the provision for pupils with SEND. There is a lack of clarity about how staff obtain appropriate assessments of pupils' needs. This limits leaders' capacity to secure equality of opportunity for all pupils to succeed.
- Since taking up her role, the headteacher has developed effective procedures for checking on teaching and pupils' progress. She gives teachers clear guidance on improving the quality of their teaching. As a result, teaching is improving but further work is required to ensure that planned improvements are embedded fully.
- Leaders' and governors' oversight and management of risk assessment is weak, and they have been slow to respond to advice. For example, risk assessments of the site have not been kept up to date.
- The curriculum covers the required range of subjects. It is well planned in terms of the areas and topics to be taught. However, in practice, the teaching of history and geography does not deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding well enough. Senior leaders have recently enhanced the curriculum for English and mathematics. Some of

these improvements are not yet embedded fully. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- The school's ethos makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and values. Parents particularly highlight their appreciation of the school, and the extensive and stimulating learning experiences their children receive. The school makes effective use of the primary physical education and sport funding. Consequently, pupils have frequent opportunities to try new sports, including fencing and badminton.
- Leaders make skilful use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Plans identify pupils' possible barriers to learning and how they will be overcome through additional teaching and social opportunities. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Parents are very positive about the increased stability and proactive leadership the headteacher is bringing to the school.
- The local authority has not provided the school with external advice and support this academic year. Very recently, governors have secured support for the school from an external consultant. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this work.

Governance of the school

- Governors have supported the stability of the school during a time of considerable turbulence in leadership. They have sought and acted upon advice to secure the future of the school and took appropriate action to secure the leadership through the appointment of the headteacher.
- Governors value the more precise information the headteacher provides about pupils' progress. They have been successful in holding leaders to account for the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, this group of pupils make good progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding. School staff use the school's agreed systems to report concerns to the designated safeguarding leaders. However, when staff raise concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm, leaders who have designated responsibilities for safeguarding, do not refer to appropriate agencies in a timely manner. Records of concerns are not logged or maintained in detail. As a result, arrangements to safeguard pupils remain weak.
- Governors' monitoring arrangements for checking the school's safeguarding arrangements are weak. They have relied too much on the information given to them by leaders. They do not have a full picture of how policies and procedures work in practice.
- The school's single central record is up to date and meets requirements. Leaders are conscientious in ensuring that all checks are carried out and recorded to ensure that adults who work with pupils are safe to do so. The school's records of safeguarding training are well maintained.

- Procedures and record-keeping for first aid are effective and ensure that parents are promptly informed if their child has had an accident at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is too variable across subjects and across the school to be good. The improved teaching programmes put in place by current leaders are not yet having the required impact. Consequently, too many of the current pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- The teaching of mathematics does not promote pupils' progress in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. Pupils acquire good skills of calculation in most classes. However, teaching does not consistently challenge pupils to apply their skills to problem solving. Pupils in Year 6 show confidence and resilience as learners when tasks are appropriately challenging. However, across the school the teaching of mathematics is too inconsistent. As a result, pupils' progress over time slows in some but not all classes.
- Pupils are not able to explain their mathematical thinking. Their reasoning skills are not being developed systematically, particularly in key stage 2. This is limiting the opportunities for the most able pupils to reach the higher standard.
- Leaders have given teachers guidance on how to promote pupils' compositional and technical skills of writing. However, this support for pupils' writing is not yet established fully. When it is used well, pupils check their own writing to ensure that they have included all the expected features. With this guidance, the most able pupils achieve well. However, without this guidance pupils, particularly those of middle ability, are unsure of how to edit and improve their writing effectively.
- Pupils learn to read fluently. However, there is limited evidence of them being taught the skills of comprehension expected at different stages of their reading development, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders have provided teachers with training. However, this guidance is not being followed consistently in all classes.
- Teachers are not fully developing pupils' skills in history and geography in line with the expectations of the national curriculum for key stage 2. Pupils are enthused by gaining knowledge of different time periods in history. However, samples of pupils' work from this year and last showed that teachers are not developing pupils' skills of making comparisons and carrying out research at the expected level for their age.
- Teachers' assessments of what pupils know, can do and understand are accurate. All teachers have an accurate understanding of pupils' progress over time. Leaders' and teachers' regular discussions about pupils' progress are paying off. Teachers use this information to adapt their teaching so that pupils are beginning to make better progress.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Pupils acquire skills swiftly and accurately because the teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils make good progress in their early acquisition of reading skills in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers of Years 1 and 2 pupils build on the good start pupils make in their handwriting and punctuation skills when they are in their Reception Year.

Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic young writers. They write with the fluency to express their ideas well.

- There are strengths in the teaching of science. Pupils in key stage 2 plan experiments, take measurements and record their findings in a variety of ways. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge when recording in charts and graphs increasingly successfully.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. Leaders do not make timely referrals to the appropriate authority when a pupil may be at risk of harm. The processes to identify and support pupils with SEND are not well managed and so the needs of all pupils are not met effectively.
- Pupils take a pride in their work demonstrated by the high-quality presentation of their work books. They are keen learners, able to discuss their learning and cooperate on shared tasks with their classmates.
- Leaders have arranged opportunities for the older pupils to support the younger children's reading. Pupils are proud of their ability to help in this way and the younger children enjoy the help that they get.
- The school develops good opportunities to promote pupils' awareness of other cultures. For example, pupils enjoyed the recent performance from an African dance troupe. Parents also value the wider experiences that stimulate their children's interest and develop their knowledge of the world. Older pupils wrote positively about their recent residential visit. The new experiences promote pupils' resilience and independence.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through information on 'stranger danger' and road safety. Pupils spoken to during the inspection could explain the importance of not giving personal information when using the internet.
- Groups of pupils benefit from opportunities to develop social skills and confidence. The work of the learning mentor is supporting pupils' social and emotional needs well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and the school is a calm and orderly place to learn.
- Pupils are attentive in their lessons. Routines are well established, and pupils understand the school's expectations of them. They believe that the rules are fair. They are pleased to have rewards for good behaviour and are proud to get points for their house.
- The family atmosphere that parents value about the school can particularly be seen when pupils play together. Older pupils are mindful of the need to share space with the younger ones. They say that pupils from all year groups play together and are friends. Pupils are confident that there is no bullying although there are times when friends fall out. They say this is quickly sorted out.

- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Almost all apparent persistent absence can be explained by circumstances which were beyond the pupils' control. The rate of attendance of pupils over the past year was broadly in line with the latest national average. Attendance since the beginning of this year is showing further improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, too many pupils have not made the progress they are capable of across key stage 2. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that progress is too inconsistent in some but not all classes.
- Pupils are not making consistently good progress in mathematics. They make good progress in developing calculation skills and their work is accurate to at least the level expected for their age. However, they have not acquired the skills of working through problems systematically and explaining their reasoning clearly. This limits some of the most able pupils in key stage 2 from building on their good starting points at the end of key stage 1.
- The progress of middle ability pupils in writing is not consistently good across key stage 2. Some pupils' writing lacks the structure, formality and use of precise vocabulary expected for their age.
- Across key stage 2, pupils are not acquiring the skills in history and geography expected for their age. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in these subjects.
- The school's assessment information shows that some middle ability pupils currently in Year 2 have fallen behind from the assessment made of their writing skills at the end of Reception. However, their current work in Year 2 shows they have made good progress so far this year. Pupils' writing shows mature handwriting and good sentence punctuation. They can retell a story maintaining the sequence of events.
- In recent years, the very large majority of Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics check. Pupils currently in Year 1 know and can use a wide range of phonic knowledge to read and to write accurately. Pupils use joined cursive handwriting. Increasingly, their writing shows good progress this term.
- Pupils acquire fluency in their reading over their time in key stage 1. The school's programme for teaching comprehension skills is not being used consistently to ensure that pupils gain these skills systematically, particularly across key stage 2.
- The size of cohorts of pupils varies from year to year and is sometimes small. Comparison of standards with national standards is not therefore meaningful. However, over past years the progress pupils have made across key stage 2 has been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The number of disadvantaged pupils has also been low in some year groups. Currently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is good and some of the most able are reaching the higher standard.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The leadership of safeguarding is ineffective across the school. There is a consequent negative impact on the leadership, safety and welfare of children in the early years.

- Children start in school with development and skills at least typical for their age. A relatively large proportion of children have skills and knowledge above that typically for their age. However, the leader for the early years does not analyse the information she holds about children's progress sufficiently well to ascertain whether groups of children are making good progress from their different starting points. This limits the information that the early years leader has to plan for improvement.
- The needs of the most able children are not considered sufficiently when children apply their learning in exploration and play. Staff do not identify the purpose of activities and how they link to the early years curriculum. Consequently, children are not challenged to apply and develop their skills to help them make good progress.
- The teaching of early writing and number is effective. Children develop an accurate and fluent cursive style quickly. This enables them to begin writing confidently. Children are developing strong skills of counting and matching groups of objects to the number in the set.
- Children learn the sounds that letters make because of the specific phonics teaching they receive. As a result, most children reach the expected level in reading. A small number reach the higher standard.
- The teacher has established good routines for the Reception children. Staff ensure that children are appropriately dressed for outdoor activities and supervision is vigilant in the classroom and playground. Consequently, children behave well and keep themselves safe in their play by listening and quickly following instructions. The classroom is calm, orderly and bright. Children in Reception get along well with their Year 1 classmates.
- Parents are very positive about their children's start to their education in the early years and highlight the accessibility and approachability of staff.

School details

Unique reference number	109091
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10047945

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing board
Chair	Iain Martin
Headteacher	Claire Golding
Telephone number	01761 462 416
Website	www.blagdonprimaryschool.com/
Email address	office@blagdonprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	February 2015

Information about this school

- Blagdon Primary School is smaller than most schools. There are two year groups in each class. The Year 1 pupils are split across two classes. Children begin school in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- The headteacher was appointed to her permanent position in September 2018. She led the school on an acting basis from September 2017 following a period when the school had been subject to interim leadership. She is employed for three days a week to lead the school and an additional half day to teach.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very low.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning across a range of subjects and age groups. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher. The inspector reviewed a wide range of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with members of the leadership team. The school's current self-evaluation and the school improvement plan for last year were reviewed. The inspector also considered the range of checks leaders carry out on teaching.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed records of current pupils' progress which the school holds. She read with a group of pupils from key stage 1.
- The inspector considered school policies relating to safeguarding. She reviewed the school's procedures for all aspects of safeguarding. She discussed the school's safeguarding procedures with governors and leaders.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils to discuss their experience of the school. She also talked to pupils in their lessons and informally observed them around the school and at lunchtime. The views of other pupils were considered through responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector spoke informally to parents at the start of the day. She evaluated the 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the range of parents' comments.
- The views of staff were considered through the 13 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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