

Inspection of a good school: Blenheim Primary School

Blenheim Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9BH

Inspection dates:

5–6 November 2019

Outcome

Blenheim Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a calm and caring school. Leaders and governors put pupils' well-being at the centre of everything they do. Staff and pupils treat each other with kindness. Pupils are polite and respectful to staff and visitors.

The school recently received an award recognising its strong partnership with parents and carers. Parents are welcomed into the school community. A parent described how school staff 'pay deep attention to every aspect of [their child's] development'. Parents typically said they could not be happier with the school.

The school displays its nine core values in corridors and shared spaces. Pupils learn about these and talk about how these values help them in their daily lives. Pupils told me that this is 'an anti-bullying school'. Bullying rarely happens; when it does, teachers act quickly to make it stop. Pupils behave sensibly in class and around school. They follow adult instructions promptly.

Leaders and teachers want all pupils to achieve their best. The school curriculum is ambitious and adapted for everyone. It includes the full range of subjects and many opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wider world. They can also participate in school life as house captains, play leaders, digital leaders or eco-warriors.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and governors want pupils to be ready for secondary school and able to contribute to society by the time they leave Blenheim. Over the past two years, leaders have improved the school's curriculum, so they can fulfil this vision.

Subject leaders have developed plans showing what pupils learn and when. Teachers know what pupils should understand and remember year-on-year. In physical education, for example, pupils develop their running, dribbling and passing skills. This helps them to play games such as hockey and football. Pupils go on to compete successfully against

other schools in these games.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They explain new concepts clearly to pupils. Pupils work well together in lessons and enjoy discussing their ideas. They take care with their books and produce work of good quality. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. However, sometimes teachers do not give pupils feedback in lessons to help them fully understand what they are learning.

When teachers plan lessons, they consider what pupils know already and what they need to practise. In mathematics, Year 5 pupils used multiplication facts to help them work out common factors. In Year 6, pupils applied their knowledge of algebra to solve mathematical problems.

In English, mathematics and science, teachers use assessment well to inform their teaching.

Pupils enjoy books and visit the school library each week. Pupils take reading books home regularly. Older pupils read widely and fluently. They showed me how they use ideas and vocabulary from the books they read to help them with their writing. Teachers read to pupils every day to promote a love of reading. They choose books that broaden pupils' interests and introduce them to new authors.

The teaching of early reading is a focus for the school. Pupils develop their understanding of key words in all subjects. They start learning to read when they begin the Reception Year. They follow a structured phonics programme. Most younger pupils can read simple texts using phonics. The weakest readers, though, need more help to develop their confidence and accuracy in using phonics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Each pupil has a learning 'passport'. This gives their teacher information about what they are good at and what they need to work on. Teachers use the passports to help them plan lessons that every pupil can take part in.

Leaders' work to enhance pupils' personal development is of high quality. Every pupil has the opportunity to attend clubs and visit museums and places of interest. Pupils have performed in London theatres and competed in sports events. This includes sports competitions for children with disabilities.

Staff morale is high. Teachers appreciate the training they receive to develop teaching and leadership expertise. They enjoy working with staff from other schools in the multi-academy trust. Staff said that leaders are supportive and considerate of workload. New teachers feel well supported by leaders and other teachers.

Trustees and governors know the school well. They have a realistic understanding of what is working and what needs to improve. Their plans for improving the school have made a difference. Governors visit the school regularly to talk to staff, pupils and parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong safeguarding culture. Pupils told me that they feel safe at school and are confident to share their worries with staff.

Leaders organise regular safeguarding training for staff which takes into account risks in the local area. Staff know what to do if they think a child is at risk. They refer concerns promptly. Leaders work closely with external services to support pupils and their families.

Leaders carry out pre-employment background checks of staff thoroughly. All records relating to the safeguarding of pupils are detailed and well organised.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to ensure that the weakest readers gain the phonics knowledge necessary to be able to read simple texts.
- During lessons, teachers need to provide clear, direct feedback to pupils relating to the lesson content. In this way, they can address pupils' misconceptions and ensure that by the end of the lesson pupils know more and can do more.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Blenheim Primary School, to be good on 22 October 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145073
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10124672
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	220
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Brian Sweatman
Executive headteacher	Marion Drake
Website	www.blenheimprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Education for the 21st Century multi-academy trust.
- The executive headteacher works across the four primary schools in the multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the executive headteacher, head of school, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, class teachers, pupils, the chair of governors, the vice-chair of trustees and the interim chief executive officer from the multi-academy trust.
- I considered reading, mathematics and physical education as part of this inspection. These subjects formed part of a deep dive, which meant that I held discussions with senior and subject leaders to find out why they were being taught in the way they were. I visited lessons and held discussions with pupils with their books. I also met with class teachers. I visited a range of teaching sessions and listened to pupils read to their teachers.
- I looked at a range of safeguarding documents, including behaviour and bullying logs. I checked the school's register of pre-employment checks and records of statutory training for staff.

Inspection team

Jo Franklin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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