

Inspection of Blackfordby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Off Main Street, Blackfordby, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 8AB

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This small village school has a warm, family atmosphere and a caring ethos. Leaders and staff provide a good quality of education for all pupils, from the youngest children in the early years to pupils in Year 6.

Leaders and staff know the pupils well. They have designed the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Staff also consider pupils' well-being. Pupils say that teachers and support staff always handle any issues quickly and kindly.

There is a calm and productive atmosphere around the school. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and respond well to instructions. They display positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They understand the 'Five R' school rules that are in place to guide their behaviour. They say that staff are 'fair and consistent'. In an assembly, pupils walked into the hall quietly and settled quickly. They listened respectfully to the teacher and to each other.

Pupils, staff and parents agree that the school is a safe place. Pupils understand about bullying, in its many forms. They feel confident that they know what to do if bullying happens. Pupils say that they can talk to any member of staff, confident that staff will listen and take action to help.

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

Leaders have rewritten the curriculum in all subjects. The revised curriculum sets out precisely what pupils should know, and be able to do, from the early years to Year 6. Leaders and staff worked together to identify the most important concepts pupils should learn, in each subject. Where possible, they have included a range of books that link with each topic. The aim is to enhance pupils' love of books and provide added interest and inspiration for the topics.

Staff are in the early stages of delivering the revised curriculum. This is the first year of implementation. In lessons, pupils are beginning to apply what they already know when faced with new concepts. Occasionally, in lessons, when teachers check what pupils can remember, they do not follow up any misunderstandings quickly enough. This means that pupils may not always recognise their mistakes.

In mathematics, leaders have a secure overview of the subject. They provide helpful support and training for staff. Pupils say they enjoy mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 could confidently explain the links between fractions, decimals and percentages.

The work in pupils' books matches what is set out in the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils produce written work that includes information that they have learned about the past. It is clear, from pupils' books, that lessons follow a logical sequence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support to access the full curriculum. Leaders and staff work proactively with parents and other agencies to assess and review pupils' needs. They ensure that pupils with SEND play a full part in the life of the school.

Leaders prioritise reading across the school. Staff provide well-stocked class reading areas. Pupils and staff alike enjoy the daily class story times when they read a class novel together. Leaders introduced a new phonics programme from September 2021. The aim was to ensure a more consistent, systematic approach to teaching early reading. Children begin learning phonics straight away in Reception. Pupils in the early years and Years 1 and 2 participate enthusiastically in the daily sessions. They read from books that match their phonics knowledge. Leaders say that the next step is to provide training and resources for staff in Years 3 to 6 so that they can better support older pupils who are still in the early stages of reading.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' broader development well. They are reintroducing clubs and activities as COVID-19 restrictions ease. All pupils can access sports activities after school. Other activities, such as a gardening club, are offered at lunchtime. Pupils enjoy taking on roles such as being members of the school and ECO councils. Some also act as school librarians. This helps pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and pride in their school.

Through the curriculum, pupils of all ages learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They understand the school's four core values of patience, hope, perseverance and constancy. They are learning to be thoughtful, respectful young citizens.

Staff say that they work well together as a strong team. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate leaders' and governors' concern for their workload and well-being. Those responsible for governance provide effective support and challenge for the school. They fulfil their statutory duties diligently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of care for pupils' well-being and safety. Staff are in no doubt that they must record all concerns promptly. Records confirm that leaders respond quickly to concerns. They take appropriate actions to ensure pupils are safe. Leaders and staff offer support and guidance for parents and carers. This includes advice about online safety, and referrals for counselling, young carers or parenting support. Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They receive teaching about how to stay safe online. They understand about peer-on-peer abuse and know that derogatory language or 'banter' is unacceptable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have rewritten the curriculum in all subjects. The revised curriculum sets out the key knowledge and skills pupils should acquire, in all year groups. Staff have begun to deliver the revised curriculum from September 2021. They do not yet have a clear picture of the full impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' ability to know and remember more over time, year on year.
- Staff in the early years and key stage 1 have received training in the school's new systematic synthetic phonics programme. They have implemented the new approach from September 2021. Staff in Years 3 to 6 have not yet been trained to support older pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support all pupils to become fluent confident readers.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	145084
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10212007
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	89
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patrick Rendall
Headteacher	Sue Savage (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.blackfordbyschool.org/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Blackfordby St Margaret’s Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in October 2017. When its predecessor school, Blackfordby St Margaret’s Church of England (Aided) Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, curriculum leaders and a range of staff. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and the chief executive officer from the Oval Learning Trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these curriculum areas: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders,

looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The lead inspector also looked at curriculum plans and reviewed samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- The inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

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