

Inspection of a good school: Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School

Hospital Lane, Blaby, Leicester, Leicestershire LE8 4FE

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 January 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School. They particularly appreciate the care and support that they receive for their emotional health and well-being. If pupils are anxious or worried, there are experts on hand to help them feel calm, safe and happy.

Pupils said that bullying rarely happens. They trust their teachers to sort out any issues quickly and effectively. Pupils are proud of their responsibilities. They help each other to feel safe in school. 'Playground pals' check that no pupil is left out of games at playtime. Pupils said, 'being at this school is amazing!'.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well. Routines are extremely well understood by children in early years. It is a pleasure to walk around the school. Pupils have such positive relationships with each other and with their teachers.

School leaders have high expectations of pupils. They are determined to improve the curriculum. This is improving. However, curriculum planning is in the early stages. Some subjects are not as well planned as is needed. Consequently, some pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills that they could do.

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

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum. They want pupils to build their knowledge and vocabulary gradually. They want pupils to revisit important knowledge so that it is well understood. Some subject planning has improved. However, in some subjects, leaders do not identify the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils do not consistently build on their knowledge across the curriculum.

There are insufficient checks in place to make sure that the planned curriculum is delivered consistently well. Aspects of the curriculum are not taught in the correct sequence. This can lead to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

The special educational needs coordinator has improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many parents and carers appreciate her work. They value the guidance, support and care that their child receives. The expectations for these pupils are high. The curriculum is not always adapted well enough to make sure that pupils with SEND achieve as well as they should.

Reading is a priority. Pupils begin to learn to read as soon as they enter the school. The early reading curriculum is well planned. Teachers are highly trained. They deliver the reading curriculum consistently well. Children in early years are excited to learn to read because of the skill of their teachers.

Leaders promote a love of reading. Pupils have many opportunities to practise their reading. They experience books of different genres and written by different authors. They try unfamiliar texts to widen their reading experience. Pupils said that they enjoy reading. They like the fact that books are available to them and that they can take them home to enjoy.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use a range of assessment methods to check what pupils know and remember. These approaches are more successful in some subjects than in others.

Pupils learn from a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. They are taught how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils learn about respect and tolerance. They are proud that 'everyone would be welcomed' at their school.

There are many opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. They develop new talents. Pupils engage in clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school. They take part in residential trips and outdoor pursuits. Pupils relish the many creative experiences that they receive, particularly playing the taiko drums and the steel pans. They know that these experiences help them to be 'happy, determined, calm and inspired'.

There is excitement that the school is growing in size. Teachers appreciate the collaborative work that is taking place with a local primary school. They enjoy the professional development opportunities that are offered. They value leaders' efforts to consider their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They treasure the 'worry boxes'. They know that there are many ways to communicate their worries and concerns. They said that they receive the help that they need.

Safeguarding records are thorough. Vulnerable pupils are supported well. Leaders make sure that they escalate any concerns. They work hard to get the external help and support that pupils and their families need.

Leaders have provided staff with appropriate, up-to-date training. Staff are confident to report any concerns. They know the safeguarding systems well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders do not identify the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. They do not sequence learning as effectively as is needed. As a result, pupils do not develop and consolidate the knowledge they need across all the subjects they study. Leaders must ensure that key knowledge in all subjects is identified and that curriculum planning is consistently well sequenced.
- The curriculum is not precisely adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders must make sure that the curriculum is carefully adapted to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the ambitious targets of which they are capable.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2017.

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.

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	119956
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10254952
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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Parry
Headteacher	Colin Bowpitt
Website	www.thistlymeadow.net
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one alternative provision.
- The headteacher is the executive headteacher of two schools: Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School and Greenfield Primary School.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher to discuss their evaluation of the quality of education. She met with the chair of governors and members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector heard pupils read.
- The inspector reviewed the curriculum plans for science and design and technology.

- The inspector observed pupils during lunchtime and playtime. She spoke to groups of pupils, including members of the school council.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the actions taken to keep children safe. She reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record of staff. She looked at information about the actions taken to protect the most vulnerable pupils. She reviewed information relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The views of parents were considered.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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