

Inspection of Blackgates Primary Academy

Smithy Lane, Tingley, Wakefield WF3 1QQ

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
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?

Leaders, trustees and governors have overseen significant improvements in the school since it became an academy. Pupils build up knowledge over time and many of them achieve well against the aims of the structured curriculum. Staff are ambitious for pupils and give them the support that they need to match these aspirations.

Low-level disruption is sometimes preventing some pupils from fully benefiting from the good quality of education in the school. Sometimes, pupils shout out or talk when the teacher is explaining something in lessons. Staff do not stop this from happening in some cases and so sometimes pupils struggle to hear what the teacher is saying or focus on their work. Incidents such as bullying can happen, but they are picked up by leaders and sorted out quickly. It is the low-level disruption through school that affects the learning and social times of some pupils.

Pupils develop their maturity and independence through a variety of activities such as the residential visits or clubs on offer. Pupils get the opportunity to design and run some of these clubs such as gymnastics and dodgeball and enjoy 'feeling like a teaching assistant' as one pupil told an inspector.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that maps out the important knowledge that pupils should be taught and when. Each subject is well planned out to connect what is learned in one year group to what is taught in the next. Leaders have planned out what children in the early years need to be able to do in each area of learning to be ready for the national curriculum subjects in Year 1.

Leaders have then planned out how these areas of learning and subjects should be taught and they have given teachers effective training to do so. Teachers are skilled in using the methods that leaders have developed. For example, in writing, teachers use the 'sentence stacking' technique to show pupils how to add different grammatical features to their work. Teachers check that pupils understand what these features are, such as a colon, and how to use them. Teachers demonstrate how to use them through helpful examples. This is similar in other subjects where teachers show pupils precisely what to do. Pupils are confident to work independently and they achieve well.

Teachers assess what pupils have remembered at the start of a sequence of work such as pencil drawing in art and design. Teachers use this to ensure pupils have remembered what knowledge they need to recall before moving on. Teachers continue to make these checks as pupils build up their knowledge and skills in what they are learning about. At the end of the sequence, pupils get to 'show off' what they can do such as completing a piece of artwork. Teachers use this to check what pupils have learned overall and to inform future planning for them or the next teacher.

Leaders ensure that reading is at the heart of what they do. They have made sure that children in the early years get off to a positive start with their reading. Staff in early years read books to children to develop their vocabulary. Children in Reception start learning phonics right from the beginning of the year. Pupils read books that contain words that they can decode. Nearly all pupils have completed the phonics programme once they are in Year 2. Pupils then progress into choosing their own books and enjoy talking about their favourite characters and plots from them.

Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in most subjects. For example, in science, teachers make sure that any pupils who have difficulties with their writing are given work with less writing to do. That way, pupils can show what they know about topics for instance animals without having to struggle to write about them. However, some pupils with SEND are given work in English that they cannot do as confidently. Teachers sometimes do not give pupils with SEND activities that focus on enabling pupils to make the small steps of progress that they need.

Trustees have ensured that all those responsible for governance have a clear understanding of their roles. The local advisory board (LAB) meets with leaders in the school to check that action plans are implemented and are having a positive impact. Trustees use information from this board to direct extra money or staffing to parts of school that might need it. This process supports school leaders to have a clear view of the quality of education in school. Subject leaders have the expertise and training to evaluate and improve their area well.

Leaders have introduced a new behaviour system that is helping them to track the number of incidents that happen in school better. However, there is still a lack of detail in how pupils' behaviour is monitored. Some of the poor behaviour that pupils experience is not known or understood well enough by leaders.

Leaders have worked well with some individuals on improving their behaviour and attendance. These pupils have individual plans that set out what their needs are and how staff will support pupils with these needs. Pupils with SEND who struggle to settle in class are given strategies that will help them to be successful learners. Staff collect pupils who struggle to get into school in a minibus. These actions have helped to improve attendance so that it is now in line with the national average. There has also been a reduction in the number of pupils who have been suspended.

Leaders' effective planning also includes the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils learn important knowledge such as how to form healthy relationships or how their bodies are changing. Staff help pupils to discuss important topics such as the importance of gender equality through philosophy sessions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know families in the community well. They spot when families might be experiencing issues and pass this on to leaders in school. Leaders work well with safeguarding agencies to offer help and guidance to parents and carers where needed. All staff have the training that they need to do this. Leaders make sure that all new staff have the qualifications needed to work in the school. Trustees and members of the LAB check regularly that all of this is in place.

Pupils are clear on how to keep themselves safe online. Staff show pupils how to use messaging apps safely and sensibly and even have one set up in school to demonstrate this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers sometimes give English tasks to pupils with SEND that contain too many components, without breaking down the precise knowledge or skills that pupils need. As a result, pupils with SEND are less successful and productive and do not have sufficient opportunities to practise what they need to get better at. Leaders should train teachers on how to match activities more precisely for pupils with SEND in English based on the specific components of knowledge that they need to practise.
- Staff, in lessons and around school, do not administer the behaviour policy clearly or consistently enough. Pupils have some lessons or lunchtimes interrupted by disruption and noise. Staff need to use the behaviour policy effectively and consistently to reduce incidents of low-level disruption.
- Leaders' recording and monitoring of pupil behaviour lacks some important detail. Some of the behaviour that pupils experience is not known or understood well enough by leaders. Leaders should further develop recording and monitoring systems, including pupil's voice, to allow them to have an increasingly accurate view of pupils' behaviour.

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	146102
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10255549
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick O'Donovan
Principal	Julie Coulson
Website	www.blackgates.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision. Recently, one registered alternative provision was used.
- The school is part of the Leodis Academies Trust.
- There are two Nursery classes, one for two-year-olds and another for three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the deputy principal, some trustees and some members of the LAB, which is the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, art and design, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors

discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at some work in science and visited the early years to look at how physical development and personal, social and emotional development are taught.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and looked at plans for pupils with SEND and a sample of their work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the checks that they make on staff and the training that they receive. Inspectors viewed records of how leaders work with external agencies to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in small groups and individually about behaviour in the school and their wider experiences.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the day and took note of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also took note of responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

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