

Inspection of Baltonsborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ham Street, Baltonsborough, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8PX

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Baltonsborough wants the best for all pupils and aims for them to be successful. Leaders have recently made strides towards this vision. The school is now prioritising the development of the curriculum. This is starting to have an impact in some subjects. However, this ambition is not yet realised. Pupils do not build their knowledge well enough across the curriculum.

The school's mission is 'Hand in hand we live and learn'. This is brought to life by the peer mentors who can be seen guiding and supporting younger pupils in their play. Pupils at this school know the 'golden rules' well. They are clear about how they should behave. Central to the school is its work on mental health. Pupils are clear about how to support this. They know who they can reach out to for support. This helps them to feel happy and safe.

Pupils enjoy taking part in the different activities on offer. Musical opportunities include pupils attending a concert at Wells Cathedral to celebrate the King's coronation. Pupils value visiting the church to partake in key celebrations such as 'Easter unscrambled'. Chess and 'pom pom' club are popular among pupils.

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

Leaders have accurately identified weaknesses in the school's previous curriculum. The school has recently taken steps to improve how well the curriculum is designed. However, curriculum developments are at an early stage. This is because subject leadership is underdeveloped. This has hampered the school's progress to bring about the necessary improvements.

The reading curriculum defines precisely what the school wants pupils to know and by when. Because of this, pupils can draw upon prior knowledge and remember their learning well. However, in many other subjects, the school has not identified the important knowledge pupils need to learn to prepare them well for their next stage. This means pupils do not remember their learning well and have gaps in their knowledge.

In contrast, the early years curriculum is well designed. Leaders have decided on the most important knowledge children need to learn. Leaders make clear which vocabulary they want staff to encourage children to use in their play, such as 'more than'. Children then use this vocabulary when discussing, for example, the number of cubes they have linked together. Children progress well through the curriculum.

Children learn phonics from the beginning of Reception. Books are matched to the sounds they have learned. Many staff are well trained in the programme and deliver it according to agreed strategies. However, a minority of staff do not have the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum well. This means they do not consistently follow the strategies to teach early reading and writing. Staff carry out

regular assessment which is used to identify any children who need additional support. This support is provided quickly so children can keep up.

In other subjects, however, staff do not routinely check what pupils know and remember from previous key learning. This is because the most important learning has not been decided. Consequently, pupils find it hard to recall their prior learning. They do not remember enough of the curriculum that has been taught.

Staff quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Learning plans detail specific targets that focus on the most pressing needs of these pupils. The school works closely with external agencies. However, curriculum limitations mean that pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Children in the early years are curious and have positive attitudes towards their education. Further up the school, pupils listen well in lessons and are polite. The school engages with parents to improve pupils' attendance. Leaders meticulously analyse and put individualised support in place for pupils. As a result, attendance has improved.

The school has developed a clear approach to teaching about personal development. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and friendships. They are tolerant of the views of others. This learning helps pupils to prepare for life in modern Britain. Pupils enjoy trips, such as learning about Fair Trade when visiting a local chocolatier.

The new headteacher has driven school improvement with a sharp focus on the curriculum. However, leaders and governors recognise there is still much to do. They have sought external advice and are acting on this. Governors now have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Staff appreciate the way leaders consult them on changes, for example, changes to policies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The leadership of subjects is not well developed. As a result, the school has not been able to swiftly address the weaknesses in the curriculum and its implementation. The school must develop the leadership of subjects so that weaknesses in the curriculum can be addressed quickly.
- In many subjects, the school has not identified the most important knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember. This means pupils are not able to build their knowledge well over time. The school must set out the precise knowledge it wants pupils to learn and by when.

- Staff do not regularly recap previous knowledge. This means pupils do not deepen their understanding and remember their learning long-term. The school should ensure that staff provide opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning so that important knowledge is embedded into their long-term memory.
- Some staff do not have the necessary expertise to deliver the phonics programme well. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could in early reading and writing. The school must ensure that all staff are suitably trained to be able to deliver the reading curriculum well so that pupils learn to read and write accurately and fluently.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 123740 |
| Local authority | Somerset |
| Inspection number | 10297932 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 86 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Anne Moody |
| Headteacher | Catherine Greenwell |
| Website | www.baltonsboroughprimary.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 22 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- There has been a change in headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school which is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The previous section 48 inspection took place in July 2017, where the school was judged to be good.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- There is an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the pupil survey and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jyotsna Paranjape

Ofsted Inspector

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