

Inspection of Blenheim Park Academy

Lancaster Road, Sculthorpe, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 7PX

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Jill Graver. This school is part of Ad Meliora Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lisa Cook, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Karl Jermyn.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending Blenheim Park Academy. Pupils are confident in school.

One pupil summed up the ethos of the school when they said, 'The best thing about this school is the communication between adults and pupils'. This supportive approach allows pupils to feel listened to and build respectful relationships.

Pupils behave well. All pupils get along and enjoy their social times together. Trained pupils are peer mediators to support friendships, but say they are rarely needed as pupils get on so well. When pupils do need a little support socially, trained staff help them. Pupils know that mistakes are part of learning and develop as resilient individuals. If ever pupils do feel sad, they know Olive the school dog will be on hand to cheer them up.

The responsibilities pupils hold such as school councillors give them an active voice. They make important decisions such as choosing sports clubs and deciding on new play equipment. These meaningful roles mean pupils develop as leaders.

Pupils talk positively about the experiences they have had such as residential trips. They also enjoy the sports clubs in football, dodgeball and yoga. These are very well attended. Pupils would however like to do more.

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

There have been positive recent changes to improve the quality of education at the school.

The curriculum in the core subjects is well established. It is carefully planned and ordered. This ensures pupils develop and build upon their knowledge over time. However, the wider curriculum is at different stages of development. Some subjects have been in place for a significant period of time. In these subjects, there is a clearly planned curriculum. Pupils build on what they have learned previously and talk confidently about what they have learned. For example, in art, pupils talk knowledgeably about different artists they have studied. They know the key elements of different art movements.

In a few other subjects, recent changes are being implemented. In these areas of the curriculum, pupils' learning is less secure. Pupils struggle to connect their learning. Staff are not clear about the precise knowledge they want pupils to learn and remember. As a result, learning in these subjects is inconsistent. Consequently, pupils occasionally develop gaps in their knowledge.

The school prioritises reading. There is a well-planned early reading curriculum in place. Trained staff teach reading in a clear way, which pupils understand. Pupils access well-matched books to their stage in learning. When pupils fall behind, this is recognised quickly as their progress is checked regularly. This enables staff to

adapt learning and fill any gaps in knowledge. Consequently, pupils learn to read fluently and achieve well.

The school has focused on developing the early years curriculum. It is clearly planned and ensures all activities are meaningful. Children access tasks led by adults and follow up their learning with purposeful activities in a rich environment. Trained adults interact well with children to develop their communication and language skills. As a result, children achieve well in early years and are being prepared for Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. These pupils are carefully identified. Appropriate adaptations such as the use of specific resources are in place for pupils who require these. This contributes towards pupils with SEND being able to access the curriculum and achieve well alongside their peers.

Behaviour is a strength. Pupils talk about behaviour with adults and understand the impact it has on their learning and the learning of others. Pupils understand this, and they make the choice to behave well. Pupils are kind and considerate of each other and get along well. This means learning proceeds without interruption in class.

A well-planned personal, social and health education programme means pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and live healthy active lives. Pupils value the wider opportunities offered such as a trip to London and the sports clubs they attend.

While pupils are respectful of different cultures and beliefs, the curriculum and opportunities pupils have do not offer pupils enough experiences beyond their local community. This means they do not fully develop a deep understanding of life beyond the local area. This means they are not as prepared as they should be for life in modern Britain.

The trust knows the school well. It supports and challenges the school to ensure it continues to improve. Staff value the support offered by school and trust leaders around their professional development and well-being. They feel valued and part of the team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum areas are being reviewed. Where this is the case the curriculums are not as effective as those that are more developed. The school

must ensure the curriculum content in the less developed subjects is considered carefully so that a cumulatively sequenced curriculum and assessment system are in place across all subjects. This will enable pupils to learn and remember the key knowledge successfully across the whole curriculum.

- The school offers a limited range of experiences and opportunities beyond the local community. Pupils do not regularly experience trips and visits to help them relate and contextualise their learning beyond the local area. As part of curriculum development, leaders, including the trust, should consider the essential experiences and opportunities they want pupils to have in order to fully prepare themselves for life in modern Britain.

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

Unique reference number	144021
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10295094
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Karl Jermyn
Headteacher	Jill Graver
Website	www.blenheimpark.norfolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher took up post at this school in December 2023.
- Several school leaders work in this school and another school in the trust.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, trustees, members of the local governing body and the chief executive officer from the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- The lead inspector also considered curriculum documentation and spoke to pupils about their learning in science, music and art.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of trust and governor meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included 16 free-text comments.
- There were 10 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. Inspectors also met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tracy Warner

Ofsted Inspector

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