



# Blackwell Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125963  
**LEA** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 282031  
**Inspection dates** 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Eira Gill AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Blackwell Farm Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		East Grinstead
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		West Sussex RH19 3JL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01342 323906
<b>Number on roll</b>	217	<b>Fax number</b>	01342 300676
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr John Durrant
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison O'Neill

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Blackwell is an average sized primary school where most pupils come from a White British background. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The number on roll has declined significantly over past years and standards on entry are now below average. The school serves an area where there are pockets of disadvantage and the number of vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have joined the school in Years 3 to 6 is above the national average and the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is below the national average. A very few traveller children attend the school. During the last two years, the school experienced substantial turbulence in teaching staff in Years 1 and 2, and this is now completely resolved. A new headteacher and two assistant headteachers were appointed in September 2005. A modern new school building will be ready for September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Blackwell is a good school that gives good value for money, and has consistently sent pupils on to their next stage of education with the necessary personal and academic skills to achieve well. The school also judges its effectiveness to be good. It has been through considerable changes from last September but staff are very positive and have responded to the new and improved systems with energy and enthusiasm. There is an air of excitement in the school at the thought of moving into a very modern new building in September.

In the Reception class, teaching, learning and the curriculum are good and children make good progress. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are also good, and excellent arrangements for booster groups for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities ensure that they all make good progress. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and progress are now satisfactory following a decline in standards. The children now entering the school are less skilled in their communication, language and learning and mathematical knowledge overall, and unforeseen changes of teachers in Years 1 and 2 have disrupted their learning. They are now receiving a consistently sound education and are making better progress as the year unfolds. Improvements can still be made, however, in the choice of activities in lessons as well as using time better to ensure learning improves further.

Leadership and management are good, and the improvements made since the last inspection show that the capacity for further improvement is good. Although governors are very supportive and give the school useful advice from their professional backgrounds, their understanding of how to challenge the school could be improved. The good commitment to care the school gives all pupils in all groups is reflected in pupils' good awareness of health and safety, as well as their positive attitudes and good relationships at all levels.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 in order to improve children's achievement.
- Arrange suitable training to enable governors to more fully challenge the school and its results.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are lower than expected, particularly in their early language and communication and mathematics skills. Despite good progress, the children's skills in these areas of learning are lower than those found nationally when they enter Year 1. In other areas of learning children are reaching the expected goals.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are below average. A fifth of the pupils have learning difficulties and the few pupils with English as an additional language need considerable support. Despite the satisfactory teaching they now receive, pupils are still catching up in reading, writing and mathematics because of slow progress made in earlier years. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory although it is evident from pupils' books that they have made good progress since January as a result of consistent teaching and learning.

Standards in Year 6 are slightly lower this year but national test results show there has been a consistent picture of good achievement since the last inspection. Achievement is good overall for all groups of pupils, especially when their lower ability on entry to Year 3 is considered. They are likely to reach the challenging targets set for the 2006 tests.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development of pupils is good. Their attitudes to learning and enjoyment of school are good and most attend regularly and punctually. The school works hard with the few families who do not fully recognise the need for regular attendance at school. Children in the Reception class make good progress in developing the personal and social skills they need from a low base. Pupils are polite and friendly and clearly understand the reasons for school rules. Behaviour is good and pupils say there is no bullying. They feel safe and are confident that any minor incidents will be dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils have a keen awareness of their responsibilities for each other in school, and in the wider community. Their ideas are taken into account through the work of school council and they have been consulted over such issues as resources for the new school. The school effectively promotes a healthy lifestyle and the fruit and snacks provided mid-morning reflect this. Pupils are gaining good numeracy, literacy and computer skills, which will help them in the future as they grow into the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Good relationships and good behaviour have been established and most lessons run very smoothly. Well trained teaching assistants take on significant responsibilities and make an effective contribution to learning. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good. Children's learning is effective and good progress is made.

In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning is thorough. However, the use of time and a few of the activities chosen to support learning do not always move the pupils' learning forward well. In spite of these relative weaknesses, it is

evident from pupils' books that the pace of their progress has improved with consistently sound teaching and thorough marking as the year has gone by.

The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. Excellent organisation of booster groups is very effective in improving learning for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with English as an additional language. Information and Communication Technology ICT is used well to make lessons interesting and learning accessible. Teachers' questioning skills are usually good but they could sometimes use more probing questions to challenge the higher attaining pupils. Teachers mark work regularly but comments do not always inform pupils about what they have to do next to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The school has recently reviewed its curriculum to ensure that full coverage is provided, and amended it to ensure that topics covered meet the needs and interests of all children. The school is beginning to develop effective links between subjects, which give pupils opportunities to practise skills learned in other subjects such as English. There is a good programme for pupils' personal development, including sex and drugs education, which clearly demonstrates how they can stay healthy and safe. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is outstanding, and enables them to achieve well. The provision for pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented is at an earlier stage and is not yet fully developed. The school makes work relevant for the pupils by incorporating visits and visitors into the topics planned. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those connected with sport and music.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of its pupils and its attention to pupils' welfare and safety is good. When interviewed, the pupils say they feel safe at school and have an adult in whom they can confide. There are good procedures in place to deal with child protection, racial harassment and bullying, and staff are fully conversant with these. The school monitors pupils' personal and academic progress well although the setting of targets is at a fairly early stage. The older pupils have a good understanding of their targets, and what they need to do to improve, but this is not consistent throughout the school. The monitoring of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is excellent and the school works closely with parents and outside agencies in order to provide the best support it can.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and the new leadership team has established more effective systems, such as monitoring teaching and learning, to support

improvement since the last inspection. Since September concentrated efforts have been made to ensure that a sharply focused development plan is being used by all staff, and this is leading to immediate improvements in curriculum planning, teaching and learning. Organisation of the management of curriculum subjects has been improved and all staff are more aware of their role in moving the school forward to meet targets. New tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress are proving to be effective in alerting staff to those pupils who need to make more progress. The inclusion manager, also the special educational needs co-ordinator, has vastly improved the effectiveness of teaching assistants, who now have appropriate training and are class based. This has had an immediate effect on improving the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Governors are very supportive and use their own professional backgrounds to support the school well. However, they need further training to challenge the school about its performance.

Leadership is committed to providing a high quality of care and education where each and every pupil is valued. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in its judgements of practically every aspect, although modest in its own view of the quality of the curriculum. The school consults well with outside agencies and with pupils and parents. A small number of parents indicated their worries about the behaviour of a few pupils but the school has identified the problems and has worked hard and effectively to eradicate small pockets of misbehaviour.





## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Children

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed meeting so many of you and joining you in lessons. We also enjoyed meeting the members of the school council and other Year 6 pupils. All of you gave us lots of information to help make our judgements. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school. I have included the main points below.

You told us how much you enjoy school and we agree. We noticed how well most of you behave, how polite you are and how much you appreciate all the interesting things that your teachers organise for you.

We think the school council is taking a lot of responsibility and we believe that the way the school encourages you to make decisions is good.

We believe that when you leave your school you will have made good progress in your learning and will be well placed to make further improvements in your next school.

We believe that the arrangements made for helping those of you with learning difficulties and disabilities are excellent.

We have asked the school to make sure that those of you in Year 2 are given even better support from the time when you had a lot of different teachers.

We have asked the governors to make sure that they have more training so that they can ask the school questions about what it is doing to make sure you all make good progress.

Finally, we hope you continue to make good progress and thank you again for making us very welcome.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Eira Gill Mrs Chris Huard