

Inspection of The Blake Church of England Primary School

Cogges Hill Road, Cogges, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 3FR

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at The Blake Church of England Primary School. They are proud of their school. They especially like the way that everyone is celebrated for their contribution to the school community. This is illustrated by the beautiful display of pupils' salt dough figures that greets all as they enter the building. It reflects leaders' ambitions that school should develop 'life in all its fullness'. Leaders aim to provide rich learning in spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life as well as the academic.

All staff share these ambitions for pupils. They work hard to ensure that pupils do well. In recent years, pupils have benefited from an improved curriculum. Achievement has improved. Pupils and staff are, rightly, proud of their successes.

Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are confident that their teachers sort out any friendship issues quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident and keen to talk about their school and their learning.

Parents and carers are also happy with 'The Blake'. One wrote: 'It feels very much like a family, with the staff genuinely caring about each child as an individual.'

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

Leaders, supported well by the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST), have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They ensure that pupils benefit from a well-considered balance of academic and pastoral learning. They have improved the quality of provision over the last few years. Pupils' attainment in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics has improved and is now in line with national averages.

Leaders throughout the school have developed different subject areas thoughtfully. They provide carefully planned sequences of lessons, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. These support staff to ensure that pupils know more and remember more over time. In some subject areas, staff have benefited from good-quality training, including from ODST.

However, some school leaders are not developing their skills. For example, some have not thought carefully enough about staff knowledge and experience. Some teachers do not have the expertise in all subject areas to deliver learning as leaders have planned it. This means that, occasionally, some pupils' learning in some foundation subjects is not of the quality that leaders intend.

Staff deliver phonics sessions well. They are alert to how pupils are doing. They adapt activities and groups to make sure that all pupils are supported at the right pace and level. They make sure that any pupils who fall behind are helped to keep up. Staff know pupils well and are skilled in adapting their approaches to help them.

Leaders promote reading throughout the school. Children in Reception Year have enjoyed reading and discussing the books of their 'set author', Julia Donaldson. They talked

enthusiastically to an inspector about them. They explained their ideas clearly and with detail.

As pupils move through the school, they deepen their knowledge of different writers and genres. They become confident, fluent readers and most display a love of reading. They think and talk thoughtfully about the books they read. Many pupils have a strong understanding of narrative and character. They use this knowledge well in their creative writing.

Staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) ensures that staff know how best to support pupils and meet their needs. Staff follow this guidance well. This helps pupils to experience success and develop independence.

Children in early years get a good start to their education. Alongside learning such as phonics and number work, leaders ensure that children develop fully. For example, activities help them to strengthen their confidence and inter-personal skills. They are very enthusiastic about the 'buddy' system where Year 6 pupils support Reception children.

Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils feel safe and are respectful to each other. Those who need extra support to manage their behaviour do well. In classes, the vast majority of pupils are focused on their learning and are positive about it.

Leaders provide a rich range of experiences and challenges to support pupils' broader development. Pupils spoke thoughtfully about the 'share your brave' project which was part of the school's mental health week. They are proud of their school's Christian ethos. They feel it helps them to understand and appreciate the world around them.

The trust and local governors have a good understanding of the work of the school. They are ambitious, realistic and supportive. They hold leaders to account and provide useful support when required.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and take their welfare and safety seriously. Staff have a clear process for reporting concerns. Any issues are quickly addressed and referred to appropriate agencies. When needed, leaders follow up their concerns appropriately.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe both online and in everyday life. Pupils know that they can speak to staff if they are worried. Pupils trust staff and ask for help if they need it.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding and recruitment processes and procedures meet requirements. The trust offers support with regular training and updates.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Senior leaders have a clear vision of the high-quality outcomes they want for pupils across all areas of school life. Along with subject leaders, they have successfully supported staff to improve outcomes in areas such as reading, writing and mathematics. However, leadership at all levels and for all subject areas is not securely developed to the same quality. Senior leaders need to support and train leaders at all levels so that they deliver the further refinements to the curriculum that are needed. They also need to monitor the success and impact of these, taking swift action as required.
- Training for staff has been effective. It has helped to improve the quality of education overall. However, some staff have gaps in their knowledge for some of the subjects they teach. Consequently, they do not secure pupils' learning to the level leaders intend. Leaders need to identify what training all staff need and help them to develop their skills.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	141840
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10135745
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kathy Winrow
Headteacher	Timothy Edwards-Grundy
Website	www.blake.oxon.sch.uk/website
Date of previous inspection	6–7 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Blake Church of England Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Oxfordshire. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in 2015 and graded outstanding.
- The school became part of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust in March 2015.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, other senior staff, the SENCo, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- I met with representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer. I also met with members of the local governing body including the chair of the governing body.

- We took account of the 84 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, including over 50 written comments. We also met informally with parents.
- We took account of the 13 responses to the Ofsted staff survey. We also spoke to a range of staff to gather their views.
- We listened to pupils read, met formally with groups of pupils and spoke to them around the school to gather their views. We also considered the school’s pupil survey.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. This involved discussions with the leaders of each subject and visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils’ work and discussions with pupils and teachers from the lessons visited.
- We scrutinised documents including the school’s own development plan and self-evaluation. We also considered documentation relating to behaviour and attendance.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing leaders’ knowledge, recording and actions. This included looking at documentation, including the school’s single central record and a sample of case files. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke to pupils, staff and governors about this aspect of their work.

Inspection team

Tracy Good, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
James Munt	Ofsted Inspector
Mineza Maher	Ofsted Inspector
Lucy English	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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