

Inspection of Blackwell Primary School

Blackwell Farm Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3JL

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Blackwell Primary, and they are keen to learn. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff encourage pupils to be confident when studying new concepts. This means that pupils know that it is okay to make mistakes because they learn from them. Consequently, pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful in this welcoming school. Pupils are friendly to others, play happily together and kindly share equipment. They know and consistently demonstrate the school's core values of 'responsibility, compassion, courage and respect', which means pupils feel safe. Pupils behave well because staff help them to understand and follow the clear behaviour expectations. Consequently, pupils take responsibility for the choices they make. Bullying is addressed promptly, and instances are rare.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of additional learning and extra-curricular activities. These enable pupils to learn new skills and develop new interests. For example, pupils learn traditional craft skills through woodland activities. Pupils relish different leadership opportunities so they can make a positive difference to their school. This includes, for example, being a school council representative.

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

Leaders, staff and governors work together to provide a high-quality education in adherence to the school's motto, 'Building Bright Futures'. They have established an ambitious and broad curriculum. This starts in the early years, where children are well prepared for their next steps. Leaders have developed subject leaders into knowledgeable champions of their subjects. They have carefully set out the content they intend pupils to learn. However, leaders' intent for subject leaders to evaluate their curriculum is not yet fully embedded. Consequently, pupils do not always benefit from curriculum changes that will strengthen their learning.

Leaders have ensured that teachers have secure subject knowledge. This means teachers explain new concepts clearly. Staff use clear modelling and effective questioning, which supports pupils to make links with their previous learning. Teachers are skilled at adapting their teaching so that pupils with SEND are supported to learn well. Pupils benefit from teachers who provide carefully designed tasks to help them follow the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils are supported to typically achieve well across most subjects. However, in some subjects, staff do not identify the knowledge that pupils have not understood. This means that, at times, teachers do not address the knowledge gaps that pupils have in their understanding. When this happens, pupils' learning is hindered.

Leaders prioritise reading throughout the school. From early years onwards, pupils are taught phonics effectively, and they develop fluency and confidence. Pupils read

books that are closely matched to sounds they have learned. Staff provide useful extra support for pupils who struggle to read, enabling them to catch up quickly. Teachers use additional reading sessions to expose pupils to books they might not otherwise read. They deliberately include rich and diverse texts to broaden pupils' reading experience.

Overall, pupils' behaviour is calm and respectful. In early years, children happily interact with each other, supported by attentive staff. In lessons, pupils confidently follow established and familiar routines. Very occasionally, pupils lose engagement in their learning, but staff are quick to address this. These high standards of behaviour are underpinned by the schools' values. Attendance is prioritised by leaders, but it is not yet high enough. Leaders take decisive action to improve pupils' attendance, including working in partnership with parents. Consequently, pupils' attendance is improving.

This is an inclusive school. Staff encourage pupils to explore and understand different religious beliefs, cultures and values. Pupils appreciate and welcome differences between people locally and internationally. Teachers inspire pupils to be curious about the world through stories, visiting speakers and news clips. Pupils appreciate discussing and debating topical issues, such as the Coronation. From this, pupils develop a secure understanding of the role of the monarchy in British society.

Leaders know their families and community well. Parents appreciate the positive relationships with staff and the support that the school provides. As one parent commented, they appreciate the 'caring, supportive and hardworking teachers'.

Governors and leaders work effectively together for the benefit of pupils. Trustees and governors have a clear understanding of their roles and provide effective challenge and support for leaders. This is reflected in the improved key stage 2 outcomes and leaders' appropriate actions to address disappointing outcomes at key stage 1 in 2022.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have provided high-quality training so that staff know and understand the potential indicators of risk to a child. They securely understand the specific local safeguarding risks. Staff know how and to whom to report safeguarding concerns.

Leaders maintain detailed records of safeguarding concerns. They make prompt referrals to external agencies and monitor these closely. They apply a follow-up and follow-through approach to ensure that identified safeguarding actions are completed.

Safer recruitment processes are followed diligently, with appropriate pre-employment checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are not yet consistent in their evaluation of curriculum implementation. This means that curriculum developments, which could further improve pupils' knowledge acquisition, are not sharply identified. Leaders need to ensure that all subject leaders have the knowledge and skills to conduct this evaluation and identify required improvements.
- Assessment in a few wider subjects is underdeveloped. This means that staff do not have a consistent understanding of how well pupils are learning. Leaders should ensure that assessment informs staff of how well pupils are learning the planned curriculum and that staff have the knowledge to adapt learning to take account of this.

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	148141
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10267798
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	352
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Faulkes
Headteacher	Sarah Martin
Website	www.blackwellprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Everychild Partnership Trust.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.

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.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders, staff, representatives from the local governing body and the board of trustees and the trust's chief executive officer and director of education.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about

their work and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also spoke to pupils, formally and informally, around the school and at playtime.
- The views of staff and parents were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys. A member of the inspection team also spoke to parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks, talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records and documents. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vickie Farrow

Ofsted Inspector

Carla Laney

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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