

Blewbury Endowed Church of England Primary School

Westbrook Street, Blewbury, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 9QB

Inspection dates

5–6 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Standards are too low. Pupils, including the most able, are underachieving across much of the school and across the curriculum. Some subjects are not covered adequately.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is often poor. Many pupils do not have the basic skills that they need, particularly in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is too low.
- Leaders do not retain enough oversight of pupils' learning. They have an overly positive view of the progress that pupils are making.
- Leaders, including governors, have not taken the necessary steps to ensure that pupils are safe. Systems and processes are not followed well enough or in a timely fashion. Pupils' well-being is not sufficiently safeguarded at playtimes and around the school.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account with sufficient rigour. They have not ensured that they fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
- Teachers do not use assessments to plan sequences of work which are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils do not know how well they are doing or how to improve. As a result, pupils do not make good progress and are often disengaged from their learning.
- Low-level disruption and poor behaviour in lessons and around the school are commonplace and often go unchecked. Pupils are unclear about behaviour management systems, which are not consistently applied.
- A lack of well-established routines and inadequate supervision in the early years contribute to a disorderly environment. Children are not supported well enough in developing safe behaviours or in learning skills effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils attend school regularly.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of additional activities, such as trips and visitors.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is effective by:
 - completing all checks on appointments and recording on the single central record
 - regularly checking that the single central record is up to date and compliant with statutory requirements
 - making sure that child protection files contain chronologies detailing the dates of all meetings attended and that minutes of meetings are filed
 - reporting incidents and concerns to the local authority in a timely fashion in keeping with the school's safeguarding policy
 - undertaking an external safeguarding audit
 - dealing promptly with any health and safety concerns, such as the making safe of electrical sockets
 - reviewing site security
 - improving the supervision of pupils on the playground and around the school
 - providing staff with appropriate safeguarding training following appointment.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management, including in the early years, by making sure that:
 - effective leadership and governance structures are established
 - middle leaders develop the skills and expertise needed to oversee their subjects and secure improvements
 - the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils more precisely
 - staff performance is regularly monitored and reviewed so that staff are held firmly to account
 - policies to support the development of pupils' acceptable and safe behaviour throughout the school are known, understood and applied consistently so that low-level disruption decreases and behaviour improves
 - the use of additional funding is kept under watchful review and evaluated for value for money and effectiveness
 - the school website meets requirements.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in early years, so that all pupils, and particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - teaching and support staff receive timely and focused training to carry out their roles effectively
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - the teaching of reading ensures that pupils in all year groups improve their reading so that, as a minimum, they reach age-related expectations
 - communication between teachers and teaching assistants improves so that pupils, and particularly those with SEND, are provided with effective support
 - teachers use accurate assessment information effectively to plan tasks that meet the needs of pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Standards have declined significantly since the last inspection. Although the 2018 national assessments in Year 6 suggested an improvement in attainment, too few current pupils are achieving the standards that they are capable of across a broad range of subjects.
- Leaders have not ensured that effective systems are in place for safeguarding pupils. Pupils' welfare is not a high enough priority because there is insufficient emphasis on keeping them safe in the playground and around the school.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's policies, such as those for behaviour and assessment, are consistently applied. As a result, there is a haphazard approach to most aspects of the school's work, which leaves pupils and staff uncertain as to what is, and is not, acceptable.
- Leaders have not managed the quality of teaching over time effectively. Some staff have not received the training that they need to do the tasks that are required of them with skill and confidence. As a result, the quality of teaching is weak. The local authority has rightly provided a high level of support for the school over the last year. However, actions to improve teaching have not been sustained or built on effectively by leaders.
- Leaders lack a sense of urgency to secure the necessary improvements. For example, the previous inspection identified weaknesses in the teaching and learning of spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, leaders have conducted little meaningful work to rectify this. Leaders have not put in place effective plans for improvement.
- The local authority has provided support for several middle leaders. Consequently, some improvement initiatives in writing, mathematics and the early years have been put in place. However, leaders are overly positive about the impact of these initiatives. Scrutiny of teaching and pupils' books shows that the impact has been limited and too variable across the school. Leaders have not monitored or evaluated this work closely enough. They do not have the capacity to tackle deficiencies or to raise the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils' books show limited coverage of some subjects. Standards in many subjects are too low. Skills, knowledge and understanding are not built on in meaningful sequences. Subject leaders do not check effectively pupils' progress or teaching in their respective subjects.
- Despite the considerable emphasis that leaders place on the school's international work, leaders have not ensured that pupils are able to apply this to an understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy or individual liberty, in any meaningful way.
- Pupil premium funding is not used well enough to target support for disadvantaged pupils. Plans are generic, and analysis is not used well enough to match support to pupils' specific needs.

- Parents and carers are worried about the standard of education on offer. Some parents are concerned about leadership, behaviour and teaching at the school. Of those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, just over a third would not recommend the school.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not fulfil their statutory duties effectively, such as checking on safeguarding systems or ensuring that the necessary information is published on the school website.
- Governors have not monitored or challenged school performance closely enough. Governors clearly want the school to succeed and acknowledge that changes are needed. One governor reflected, 'We haven't been as rigorous in holding leaders to account as we should be.'
- The use of additional funding, such as that intended for pupils eligible for the pupil premium, is not monitored closely enough. Governors do not check that it is well tailored to pupils' needs or that it is raising standards for those pupils
- Governors do not communicate sufficiently well with parents to acknowledge or respond to their concerns. For example, many parents expressed concern about a long-standing staffing situation in the school. Governors have done too little to reassure parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not ensured that all necessary checks on appointments are completed quickly enough, or that they fulfil statutory requirements, for example in reporting incidents to the local authority.
- Staff training in keeping pupils safe is sometimes not as timely or as detailed as it should be. As a result, not all members of staff have a confident and comprehensive knowledge of how to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils are not always adequately supervised during social times or around the school. This puts pupils at potential risk, for example as the school grounds lead directly onto the car park. During the inspection, gates to the school were not secured at the start of the school day.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of pupils are too low. Staff have not received enough up-to-date training to develop their skills and expertise. Consequently, teaching is variable across subjects.
- Teachers provide tasks that are too often low level, which means that learning time is

lost, and pupils become disengaged. For example, pupils' learning is limited where they spend time cutting out pictures and sticking them on paper.

- Pupils repeatedly told inspectors that they do not know how well they are doing or how to improve their work. The school's marking policy is not routinely followed to provide pupils with the feedback that they need to take the next steps in their learning. As a result, many workbooks and folders demonstrate the same basic errors repeated over time, particularly in spelling and punctuation.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan tasks to move pupils' learning on when they are ready. For many pupils, including the most able and those with SEND, tasks are not pitched at the right level. For some pupils, this means that they simply repeat things that they already know. For other pupils, tasks are inaccessible and beyond their reach. As a result, the learning needs of many pupils, including those with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, and most-able pupils, are not well catered for and their progress is hindered.
- Pupils often do not understand the point of many learning activities. They told inspectors they were doing tasks because 'we have to'. Since teaching is poorly planned, pupils do not understand how tasks and activities support their learning.
- Leaders describe the teaching of reading in the school as 'incidental rather than systematic'. The 'free readers' who read to inspectors explained that they do not read regularly. As a result, their reading skills are not developed well enough.
- Teachers do not consistently communicate well with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils, particularly those with SEND, receive tailored support. Sometimes teaching assistants have not had the training or been given the information that they need to support pupils' behaviour and learning well.
- Some parents expressed concerns about communication and a lack of information about how well their children are doing. A significant proportion of parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to Parent View are dissatisfied with the quality of teaching at the school and their children's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Despite often good intentions, the school's systems to monitor pupils' welfare and safety in school are not sufficiently robust. Leaders' work to develop pupils' welfare is not systematically evaluated to check the impact that it is having.
- Some parents expressed concerns about the welfare of their children. A quarter of those replying to Parent View did not feel that their children were well looked after.
- Pupils' approaches to new challenges and tasks lack commitment and the resolve to do well. Many pupils do not show high levels of care or pride in their written work.
- A small minority of pupils have benefited from the opportunities provided by an international exchange programme. Many more pupils say that they enjoy the wide

range of trips and visitors facilitated by the school. However, opportunities for personal development within school are limited. For example, pupils told inspectors that there used to be a school council, but that this no longer operates.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Low-level disruptive behaviour is commonplace. As a result, learning is limited because staff either ignore poor behaviour or spend disproportionate amounts of time reminding pupils of expectations, often repeatedly and with limited response.
- The behaviour policy is not fairly or routinely applied. Consequently, pupils lack respect for the rules. For example, pupils told inspectors that there were rules around the outdoor play equipment, but that 'no-one did anything if the rules were broken'.
- Pupils have some understanding of what constitutes bullying and say that it happens rarely. However, they are not clear as to what they should do if it occurs or where they could go for help. Pupils who spoke to inspectors could not recall any recent e-safety lessons, although they had recently had an assembly about certain internet content.
- Adults are not sufficiently vigilant when supervising pupils, including in the early years. Consequently, some pupils engage in unsafe play unchecked. Pupils are sometimes sent out of lessons without a watchful eye to ensure that they are safe.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Attendance has improved this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are too low. Pupils' books demonstrate that too few pupils make sustained gains over time in their learning journey through the school. As a result, too few pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' basic skills are underdeveloped. For instance, many pupils do not have the basic spelling, punctuation and grammar skills expected for their age. Pupils struggle to apply their mathematical skills to solve complex problems, as their understanding and mathematical reasoning are not securely developed. In part, this is because planned activities are not sequenced well to support pupils in consolidating their skills and understanding.
- Pupils with SEND are not catered for well enough and consequently are underachieving. Adults do not always adapt tasks appropriately or plan activities that build on pupils' prior learning.
- Too few disadvantaged pupils achieve the standard expected for their age in reading, writing or mathematics. Additional funding is not sharply pinpointed to meet their needs.
- The most able pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable in reading, writing or mathematics. Parents are concerned that the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. One commented, 'My child is very capable, yet I see no

evidence of him being pushed academically.’

- Pupils underachieve across the wider curriculum. They do not receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Work is not sufficiently well planned to build sequentially on their skills or deepen their understanding. Consequently, pupils are not challenged well to prepare them for the next stages of their education.
- Outcomes in the phonics screening check have risen steadily over time. In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was broadly in line with the national figures.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The quality of supervision is not sufficiently well developed in the early years to support children in developing their play and learning in a way that keeps them safe. During the inspection, children were climbing unsafely on precariously stacked equipment and structures.
- Leaders have not ensured that routines are in place to support staff and children. As a result, adult interaction is often focused on managing behaviour rather than developing early learning skills.
- Most children start school with skills and understanding that are typical for their age. In 2018, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development increased and was in line with that seen nationally. Consequently, a greater proportion of children were better prepared for the move to key stage 1. However, too few of the most able children make sufficient progress to exceed the early learning goals and achieve highly.
- The early years leader has benefited from support from the local authority. As a result of this work, she has refined the way that pupils’ progress is tracked. This has helped her to understand what needs to be done to improve provision. However, there are yet to be significant improvements in either the quality of adult–child interactions or the outside learning environment. As a result, children’s progress is hindered.
- Leaders have introduced an assessment system which has resulted in more detailed recording of children’s development. However, the early years leader recognises that the scope of these observations needs to expand to support children’s learning more fully across all the curriculum learning areas.
- Adults do not always engage well with children in a full range of learning activities. For example, when singing or story-sharing only a small proportion of children actively participate or have access to the resources. As a result, some children become disengaged and low-level disruption results.
- Parents are divided in their views of the early years provision. While some felt that their children are happy and enjoy school, others raised concerns about safety and supervision, particularly in the playground and around older children.

School details

Unique reference number	123167
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10058185

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Hewson
Headteacher	Marion Mills
Telephone number	01235850411
Website	www.blewbury.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	head.3248@blewbury.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2015

Information about this school

- The substantive headteacher has reduced her time in school to 0.8 days since the previous inspection. She is supported by a co-headteacher who works for 0.2 days in this role, in addition to having a classroom responsibility and leading mathematics.
- The substantive headteacher is retiring at Easter. Governors have not yet interviewed for her replacement.
- The school is a Church of England endowed school. The school's last section 48 inspection was in February 2017.
- The diocese and local authority had identified the school as needing additional support. Consequently, a raised level of support has been in place for a range of leaders for 18 months.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age year groups.

- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium grant is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above that nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, sometimes accompanied by the co-headteachers, visited lessons across the school. Pupils were observed around the school, including during play and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and checked pupils' books with subject leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteachers, governors and other leaders. An inspector also met with a group of staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local authority and had telephone conversations with the school-improvement partner and a representative from the Diocese of Oxford.
- Inspectors spoke formally to a group of pupils and heard pupils read. They spoke informally to other pupils during lessons, playtimes, lunchtimes and on a tour of the school.
- A wide range of the school's documentation was considered by inspectors, including the self-evaluation, the development plan, governors' minutes, reports from the headteacher to the governors, local authority visit reports, information on pupils' progress and attainment, and records of behaviour and attendance. The inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding records and policies.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views through the 41 responses to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, including 21 free-text responses. Inspectors held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day. While the link to the staff survey was not distributed, staff views were also considered through eight written viewpoints.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Charlotte Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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