

# Blackwell Community Primary and Nursery School

Primrose Hill, Blackwell, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 5JG

<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and governors. The headteacher has created an inclusive school where everyone is valued.
- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved and it is now good. As a result, pupils' outcomes have improved and are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Those who are potentially vulnerable, disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively to make good progress.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is effective. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check has improved and is now above the national average.
- School staff have a good understanding of the needs of each pupil. The provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils behave well around school and in lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning, and cooperate and collaborate well.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They speak with clarity and confidence about how the school teaches them to keep themselves safe, including online.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. The broad curriculum supports children's early development and they make good progress in all areas of learning. This ensures that they are well prepared as they enter Year 1.
- Some governors know the school well. They provide effective challenge to leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not typically outstanding. The explanation of independent tasks is not always clear, and when this is the case, pupils are unsure what to do.
- Attendance remains below average, despite the school's attempts to improve it.
- A significant minority of pupils do not write in a legible style or present their work neatly.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have not established how teachers should assess pupils' achievement in their subjects.
- Good practice in governance has not been shared effectively across the whole governing body.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement further by:
  - ensuring that explanations are always clear so that pupils know exactly what they are being asked to do
  - improving the teaching of handwriting skills so that most pupils can write legibly using joined writing by the end of key stage 1 and present their work neatly.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing assessment procedures in those subjects that do not yet have them, so that pupils' progress can be better tracked
  - sharing best practice in governance across the whole governing body.
  
- Improve attendance so that it meets or exceeds the national average.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The long-standing headteacher is well respected and pupils and staff feel valued. They share a pride in the school and work hard to be successful.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well because they keep a close check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Plans for further improvements are detailed, accurate and reviewed regularly.
- Leaders have responded to the issues raised in the previous inspection report and their actions have improved the quality of teaching and raised academic standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Robust systems for managing the performance of staff bring together a range of ways in which the school keeps its effectiveness under review. Leaders hold teachers to account strongly for how well their pupils are doing, not least at pupil progress meetings, where they have to answer for any dip in pupils' progress and show what they are doing about it to get the pupils' learning back on track.
- The headteacher and some subject leaders check the quality of pupils' learning by observing it at first-hand in class. All the subject leaders have the opportunity to analyse the work in pupils' books and check the planning of the curriculum in their subject areas.
- The school has responded positively to national changes in assessment. Leaders of English and mathematics have devised a new approach to assessment and leaders and teachers have a good understanding of what assessment information tells them. They use it well to plan further improvement. Frequent opportunities to work with other teachers in local schools have enhanced teachers' skills in measuring pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have not yet ensured that new assessment procedures to track progress in other subjects are established.
- Effective use is made of the opportunities that teaching staff are given for professional development and sharing practice within the local cluster of schools. Extensive training for all teaching staff has resulted in improvements in the overall quality of teaching and especially in the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to close gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The additional government funding is used well to employ specialist reading and mathematics teachers and additional teaching assistants. They provide good-quality support for those individuals who are in receipt of these extra funds. They work alongside pupils in small groups, reinforcing concepts and developing their confidence as learners.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils understand how their learning in these areas helps them in their everyday life, now and in the future. The promotion of fundamental British values is a strength of the school. Pupils recently took part in celebrations for the Queen's birthday, the school council visited the Houses of Parliament and older pupils took part in a politics day when they discussed the relative merits of keeping coalmines open or closing them down.
- All subjects are included within a well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum that is responsive to the needs of the pupils and constantly adjusted to meet them. Reading, writing and mathematical learning is included in different subjects. Pupils across key stage 2 enjoy French lessons each week and they have opportunities to both write and speak that language.
- Pupils take part in a number of curriculum enrichment activities. These include visits to local places of interest, such as Chatsworth House, and a theatre production of Jack and the Beanstalk. Visitors to the school have included a recycling workshop and a Stone Age and Iron Age workshop, all of which enhance learning. These events make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders use the sports premium funding effectively to develop pupils' knowledge of competitive games and activities. Specialist teachers and coaches provide a wide range of sport in school and competitive events outside school.
- Members of staff maintain detailed records of incidents of unacceptable behaviour and a systematic approach to analysing behaviour is due to be introduced. This will especially help the school tackle any recurring low-level slips in behaviour that have an impact on learning or the school community as a whole.
- The local authority has played an effective role in the improvement of this school through its brokerage of effective training, the personal and skilled support of advisers and external validation of improvements. This has led to improvements in the quality and consistency of teaching across the school and supported

the development of middle leaders.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body as a whole functions well and carries out its statutory duties effectively. However, some governors have not had the necessary training and support to help them become as effective as their colleagues.
- Governors know the school well. Their regular attendance at meetings, events and a wide range of relevant training reflects their commitment and dedication.
- Governors hold school leaders to account for the quality of teaching. They receive detailed reports and information from a range of sources and regular visits to classes enable them to see for themselves how well pupils engage in their learning.
- Governors set challenging targets for the headteacher. They are aware of the link between teachers' performance and their pay and draw on a range of information to reward good teaching.
- Members of the governing body know how school leaders use additional funding. They know that the performance of disadvantaged pupils is improving, because they understand the data they receive in relation to the progress of these pupils.

- The arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection, are effective because all staff and governors have been trained and are clear about protecting the welfare of all the pupils. Procedures for identifying individuals who may be at risk are clear and staff are extremely vigilant in helping pupils, and, where relevant, their families to overcome issues that might affect learning. Procedures for checking the suitability of adults who work with children are all in place but there are some minor administrative errors in the documentation. Staff and governors have been trained to protect the pupils from radicalisation and extremism through the government's 'Prevent' duty, and are aware of how to identify any potential risks or concerns.

**Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection because of the commitment of senior leaders in providing good-quality training. This is based on regular monitoring of teaching and learning, which has been tailored to each teacher's needs.
- Teachers take pride in their attractive and welcoming classrooms. Stimulating classroom displays reinforce the pupils' knowledge and skills. Good-quality work completed by pupils is displayed in the classrooms and around the school to celebrate their success and show others what is possible. Teachers set homework regularly across all classes to extend work covered in lessons and reinforce spellings and basic number facts.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers and teaching assistants use well-targeted questioning that probes and extends pupils' thinking. They value pupils' answers and are mostly skilled at building on pupils' responses, although occasionally some staff too readily accept one-word answers.
- Teachers are mindful of the need to support pupils in becoming confident speakers and listeners, given their low starting points in communication skills. Both speaking and listening skills are promoted well by teachers, who give pupils many opportunities to work together and discuss their ideas. Teachers introduce subject-specific, technical vocabulary effectively and pupils show an accurate use of technical language in their discussions.
- Well-briefed teaching assistants give pupils good support with their learning and behaviour. In lessons, they help those who are least-able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to take a full part in whole-class sessions. Teaching assistants work with different ability groups at different times to support their learning, as does each teacher.
- The children are enthusiastic readers and teachers give them regular opportunities to read for pleasure and borrow books from the well-stocked library. Reading is taught well so that pupils enjoy books and learn how to read confidently. Effective phonics teaching ensures that they secure the key skills they need to read and write successfully from an early age. Younger pupils and less-proficient readers read to an adult a number of times a week, building their confidence as well as their reading skills.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in mathematics and encourage them to become increasingly confident when working with numbers. Pupils are given many opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to real-life problem-solving activities.
- Teachers are becoming accustomed to the school's new arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. They regularly check how well pupils are doing. Good use is made of

opportunities to recap on the previous day's learning to consolidate new skills. Through regular meetings with school leaders, teachers identify any pupils in danger of slipping behind and then develop effective strategies to help them to catch up quickly.

- Teachers comply consistently with the school's marking policy. They make clear to pupils what they have done well and offer appropriate guidance to help them improve their work further. Pupils are keen to get feedback and have time to respond to the comments made.
- Staff are very aware of the different groups of pupils they teach. Teachers use the assessment information about pupils' achievements effectively and usually challenge pupils appropriately. This is resulting in these pupils achieving well and making good progress.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils trust staff and have the confidence to ask questions and to offer their opinions, knowing they will not be criticised if they are wrong. Teachers usually give clear explanations, but on occasion, because opportunities to model a task are not taken or the initial explanation of the work the teacher wants the pupils to complete is not sufficiently clear, there is among pupils some confusion, low-level chatter and a loss of productive lesson time.
- The teaching of correct letter formation leading to joined handwriting is not secure or embedded across the school. Some pupils' handwriting lacks fluency and shows some incorrect letter formation, affecting legibility and neat presentation.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school cares extremely well for pupils. A wide range of support is available should pupils need it. The school works effectively with outside agencies to maintain pupils' safety and well-being and to ensure that they receive good-quality care, guidance and support.
- Pupils are developing into confident learners through the positive relationships that exist in school and the praise and encouragement they receive from adults. They are keen to share their views about school and learning and are very positive about all their experiences at school. They are proud of their school and respectful of adults and each other. A pupil spoken to during the inspection described it as a 'great school!'
- Pupils enjoy the different responsibilities teachers give them, including being reading buddies to younger pupils, golden-mile leaders, sports ambassadors, mini-leaders at lunchtime and helping in assemblies. They also take their responsibilities as school councillors very seriously and play an important role in raising funds for charity and the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Most parents spoken to and those who responded to the online questionnaire, agree that their children feel safe and are happy at school. Pupils explain how the school teaches them to maintain their personal safety in different situations, such as on the roads, and when using mobile phones and the internet. They also learn about the dangers of drugs and alcohol misuse.
- Pupils who spoke with inspector said that bullying is rare, but that sometimes they fall out with their friends. Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and have a good knowledge of different kinds of bullying. The curriculum and daily school assemblies include work on promoting good relationships and nurturing pupils' positive attitudes towards each other, and promoting respect and tolerance for all. Pupils have complete confidence in adults to sort things out effectively should bullying occur.
- The school actively encourages pupils to stay fit and healthy. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to make informed choices about healthy eating and keeping themselves physically fit. They are encouraged to participate in the golden mile activity at lunchtimes, walking or running a mile. Pupils have also had the opportunity to take part in a range of different sporting activities to promote physical fitness, including tai chi, 'Row to Rio', Bikeability and squash coaching.
- Attendance remains an issue for the school. Currently, and in recent years, it has remained below average. The school works hard with outside agencies to support and challenge a small core of families whose children are persistently absent. Leaders have made firm decisions to enforce attendance, but the school recognises that it must continue to strive to convince all parents of the need for their children to attend school regularly and promptly if they are to get the best from their time in school.
- The breakfast club provides a safe and social start to the day for pupils from all age groups.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils of all ages clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They are polite, respectful and friendly, have a good understanding of what acceptable behaviour is, and are aware of the boundaries set by staff. During lessons, pupils display positive attitudes to learning, are attentive and focus on their learning. They mostly only lose concentration when they are unclear about what to do.
- Pupils of all ages play well together. They have plenty of equipment to play with and on, and they use it all sensibly and safely. When problems occur between pupils, they are usually able to resolve these themselves. Movement around the school is calm and orderly.
- Pupils acknowledge that some pupils have what they call 'anger issues' and can retaliate in the wrong way. However, they are very confident that staff quickly sort out any such issues. The few pupils with specific behavioural needs are supported really well so that their needs do not overly interfere with their learning or that of other pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have improved steadily in all year groups and pupils are making good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- In the most recent end of key stage 2 national tests, results indicate that all pupils reached the age-related expectation for mathematics and a well-above-average proportion reached the age-related expectation in reading, writing and English grammar, spelling and punctuation. There was no gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in school.
- The teaching of phonics is now very effective from the early years. In the Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level has improved since the previous inspection and is now above the national average.
- The small numbers of pupils in each year group suggest caution when considering averages. In the end of the Year 2 assessments in 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. School assessment information and inspection evidence confirms consistently good progress across Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers challenge the most able pupils well in lessons, and the school's information confirms that they make good progress across the year groups. Work in books indicates that all are reaching their age-related expectations in writing and mathematics, with many exceeding these expectations.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good. Achievement by the end of Year 6 this year, in reading, writing and mathematics, is above national expectations. There is no gap in attainment in reading, writing or mathematics with others in school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who have fallen behind and need to catch up in their learning, also make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because leaders and teachers have high expectations of what this group of pupils can achieve and consequently plan activities that match their needs. Their progress is tracked carefully and they receive effective individual support through a reading recovery and catch-up mathematics programmes delivered by specialist teachers.
- The school's recent focus on improving writing has made a discernible difference to the content and quality of writing across all subjects. They confidently complete written work using a range of different styles such as diary, letter and story writing. Pupils use these different styles effectively to record the knowledge they have gained in a range of subjects. While the content and structure of pupils' writing continues to improve across the school, handwriting is not as strong.
- Achievement across many subjects of the curriculum is good.
- Overall, pupils are prepared well for secondary school. They also develop particularly good all-round knowledge and skills in science, history and religious education.

## Early years provision

is good

- The majority of children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age, however, communication skills and early number skills are less well developed. As a result of thorough planning and well-structured learning, they make good progress from their varying starting points and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

- Leadership and management of the early years provision are very effective. The vision of the early years leader, together with her high expectations, have secured significant improvements in children's achievements since the previous inspection. In 2015 and 2016, the proportion who reached a good level of development was above the national average.
- The effective early years leader understands the strengths and areas for development, and uses assessment information to plan carefully for ongoing improvements.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is consistently good. Leaders plan the curriculum around children's interests. Staff use effectively the good knowledge they have about individual children's skills to plan for the needs and abilities of all children, especially the most able.
- The large number of disadvantaged children make good progress with their learning, and leaders use additional funding successfully to support their particular needs.
- The inside areas are well resourced, stimulating and thought provoking. They provide children with rich opportunities to learn from self-chosen activities as well as planned group sessions that have a focus on the important early skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Staff use the outdoor space creatively to further enhance learning. During the inspection, an adult was using probing questioning to assess children's understanding of floating and sinking while they used tweezers to lift small pebbles and floating plastic discs out of the water tray.
- During an adult-led session, children were drawing on their secure phonics knowledge to write sentences about the gingerbread man from the story they had all been reading and discussing together. Staff take every opportunity to talk and ask questions of the children to promote language and develop confidence in speaking, which in turn supports their creativity in building written sentences.
- Children's behaviour in the early years is good. They listen well to adults and are keen to learn. They enjoy playing and learning alongside each other and share resources sensibly. This is because adults have high expectations and clear, well-established routines are in place.
- There are good procedures to get to know the children and their families before they start at school. Good relationships with parents and the regular individual sharing of online photos and assessment information ensure that parents are well informed about their children's progress and can work in partnership with the school to support their children's learning.
- Staff know the children well and create a warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere. Excellent relationships between adults and children have a positive impact on the progress that children are making. They ensure that all the safeguarding and welfare requirements appropriate to this age group are met.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112506
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011729

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Bunning
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joy Thompson
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 811281
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.blackwell.derbyshire.sch.uk">www.blackwell.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–4 April 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There is a higher than average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free schools meals and those looked after by the local authority).
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, with and without statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans, is well above average.
- Children in the early years are taught in a single unit. Children attend the Nursery class part time and Reception class full time. There are three additional mixed-age classes in the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club run by external providers.
- One teacher has joined the school since the previous inspection. A new headteacher comes into post in September following the retirement of the long-term headteacher.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or part lessons, covering all classes in the school. The headteacher accompanied the inspector on four of these observations.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, a whole-school assembly, lunchtimes and at playtimes.
- The inspector scrutinised work in books and folders and discussed pupils' work with them during lessons.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders for English and mathematics, all other subject leaders and the early years leader. The inspector also met a group of pupils, representatives of the governing body and a local authority adviser. She also met with parents informally to gather their views as they collected their children at the end of the school day.
- The inspector looked at the school's work and considered documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governing body meetings, and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- The inspector took into account 24 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector considered the staff questionnaire responses.

## Inspection team

Lindsay Hall, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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