

Inspection of Blakesley Hall Primary School

Yardley Green Road, Stechford, Birmingham, West Midlands B33 8TH

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils provide a warm welcome to all at Blakesley Hall Primary School. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone with respect, including those with alternative beliefs or different backgrounds. This is evident through pupils' daily interactions and their consideration of others. This creates a climate for learning where pupils are happy and feel safe at school.

Pupils behave well and build positive relationships with others. Staff invest time in helping pupils to recognise and manage how they are feeling. This supports pupils' positive mental health. Pupils speak openly about their feelings and how they are learning to manage their emotions. Their personal development is further enhanced by a range of trips, visits and sporting opportunities. These include opportunities to perform in choir concerts and represent the school in a range of sports.

Pupils experience a diverse, rich curriculum, where reading is given a high priority and books are valued. When money was raised through an enterprise challenge, pupils decided to buy a 'book vending machine'. Pupils value the opportunity to choose books and do this with pride.

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

The school has created an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). High-quality training has raised the skill level of all staff. Subject leaders lead their subjects well. Strategies that help pupils to remember their learning are effective, and older pupils are able to discuss their learning in some detail. However, some pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, leave school without reaching the standards expected for their age. This is because they have not acquired sufficiently strong English language skills. Leaders have prioritised the development of language across the school, and outcomes are improving. The school has identified key subject-specific language that pupils need to know and learn, but this is not sufficiently prioritised. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to make sense of new learning.

The school identifies pupils with SEND promptly and meets their needs well. Teachers carefully adapt learning so that pupils can work successfully alongside their classmates. Support staff are skilled in supporting individual pupil's needs and developing their independence.

The policy and expectations for pupils' behaviour have recently been revised. This has led to improved behaviour. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens, but if it does, they trust the adults to sort it out quickly. On the playground, pupils play well together, take turns in games and treat each other with care.

The impact of the school's efforts to build character can be seen across the school. Pupils are able to explain how to manage their own emotions and cope in different

situations. Pupils have many opportunities to make decisions and take on leadership roles. Through working as learning ambassadors, prefects or school councillors, pupils learn about how democracy works. Pupils recently enjoyed a visit from their local MP, who talked to them about how laws are made. These planned opportunities enrich the school's curriculum and ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values.

Children settle quickly into the early years. Routines are clear and well established. Children listen well and treat each other with respect. The curriculum in the early years has been well considered and prepares children for future learning.

Leaders have recently reviewed the school's phonics scheme. They have ensured that all staff are skilled in delivering the school's programme. Adults support pupils effectively to catch up with their reading. As a result, pupils' phonics outcomes are improving.

The school works hard to encourage regular attendance. Learning mentors work in collaboration with families to help them to improve pupils' attendance. Despite this, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means these pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Leaders recognise this and continue to emphasise the school's expectations for attendance.

Parents and carers are mostly positive about the school. The school engages well with parents and the wider community. The website provides information to help parents keep their children safe. It contains information about the curriculum, school life and extra-curricular clubs. Despite this, a significant minority of parents do not feel that they receive timely information about some aspects of school life, including how well their children are doing and what they are learning.

Governors know the school well. They understand their role and bring additional skills to support and challenge leaders effectively. They work with leaders to ensure that staff well-being and workload are carefully considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This leads to gaps in their learning and means that they do not achieve as well as they should. The school should extend and strengthen the strategies it uses, including its work with parents, to improve attendance.
- Some parents do not feel that the school communicates well with them about some aspects of school life. This means that these parents miss important

information. The school should review its methods of communication and ensure that all families receive the information that they need in a timely manner.

- The school has not ensured that pupils develop subject-specific language skills securely. This means that pupils sometimes have difficulty understanding a written question or dealing with problem-solving activities. The school should ensure that pupils' language skills are extended so that they understand, and have the confidence to use, a wide range of vocabulary across all subjects.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103300
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294479
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	556
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joshua Cronin
Headteacher	Heather Phillips
Website	www.blakesley.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, science and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors

held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Records of governors' meetings and other reports about the school were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school and talked to them informally in a range of activities about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, an inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the day and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to staff surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Anne Potter, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Maybank	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

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