

# Blakedown CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	116784
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379300
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Mary Davis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	108
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Beckford-Bond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Birmingham Road Blakedown Kidderminster DY10 3JN
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379300



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Mary Davis

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons and all four teachers and spent five hours in classrooms. She held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, and spoke to parents. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at: policies; development planning; data related to the tracking of pupils' progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; pupils' work; and 70 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with others from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

Blakedown Church of England is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The great majority of pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are very low and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils supported at the school action plus stage or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

The school operates a mixed-age class organisation across four classes. There have been several staff changes, including in the senior leadership since the previous inspection.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It has the Artsmark gold, the Green Eco and the International School (intermediate level) awards.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Blakedown Church of England Primary is a good school. Much of its work has improved strongly over the current academic year. Overall effectiveness is not outstanding because teaching and learning are not consistently good or outstanding.
- Achievement is good. Attainment is above average, particularly in reading. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is consistently good. Rates of progress in Key Stage 2, below average in 2011, are now accelerating strongly in reading, writing, and mathematics as a result of clearly focused strategies and improved quality of teaching. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to do their best.
- Teaching is good. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve, providing an appropriate level of challenge for those of highest ability. There remains some inconsistency in the level of challenge in mathematics. Tasks are planned well to meet the needs of the wide range of ability in each class. However, in a small minority of lessons, the management of these tasks is not sufficiently finely tuned to ensure that all groups of pupils learn at a fast pace throughout the lesson.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming and say they feel safe and well looked after by adults. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Attendance rates are consistently above average.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. The headteacher has taken robust and effective action to raise achievement and to improve the quality of teaching. The curriculum supports pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development well and provides good opportunities for the development of literacy skills in different subjects. Cross-curricular opportunities to support the development of mathematical skills are not so well embedded.

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

- Accelerate the pace of learning by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve, particularly in mathematics
  - developing classroom management practice to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged consistently throughout each lesson.
- Develop the curriculum to provide increased opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in different subjects.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers, rightly, expressed the view that their children enjoy their learning. They also expressed positive views about their children's progress, although a very small minority expressed concern about the progress made during Key Stage 2. The inspection focused closely on these concerns and found that pupils in that key stage are now making good progress and judged achievement to be good overall.

Children enter the Reception Year with levels of skill and understanding that vary considerably year on year. They make rapid progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage and establish good learning and listening skills. Almost all of the current cohort has already reached end-of-key-stage expectations in most areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1. A systematic literacy scheme enables pupils to develop their reading skills so that they are able to read fluently and with expression. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has been consistently above average over recent years, with all pupils attaining the expected levels in English and mathematics. The proportion attaining the highest levels has been lower however and, in 2011, the progress made by those of highest ability was well-below average. Leaders have acted to tackle this and there is clear evidence that progress is rising strongly with all current Year 6 pupils now making better than expected progress in reading and all able to read at the highest levels already. Most of these pupils are on target to attain higher levels in English and mathematics.

Pupils say that they enjoy their learning and the inspector observed them showing enthusiasm and excitement at their achievements. One Year 1 pupil exclaimed 'I'm good at this!' as he practised adding and taking away using a number line. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed engrossed in a problem-solving activity where they chose their own method of working. Pupils say that they value the new target sheets that explain the next steps clearly. In the best lessons, they are enabled to develop independence further because they are provided with clear success criteria so that they can check their own work to ensure they are meeting their targets.

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Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and appropriate tasks are set for them. As a result, they make equal progress to their peers, as do the very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

## Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and all was at least satisfactory. Leaders' monitoring shows that an increasing proportion of teaching is consistently good. Almost all parents and carers expressed the view that their children are taught well, particularly in Reception Year and Key Stage 1. In most lessons, activities are fun and relevant to pupils' experience. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, pupils showed great enjoyment, undertaking a variety of physical activities such as jumping and running, working as a team to time and record their results and then work out their average performance. Typically, teachers' planning sets out clear expectations for the learning of all groups of pupils and resources are prepared well to enable this. Additional adults are used very well to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, enabling them to be included fully and to achieve. Teachers also encourage these pupils to work independently. For example, one pupil expressed excitement at the achievement of discovering for herself, a pattern in her results during a mathematics investigation. Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development well, for example through opportunities to reflect and write about issues that affect them and to work together and support each other. Pupils are well practised in using 'talk partners' to discuss their work.

In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and set challenging tasks where pupils can develop independence. This is not always the case in mathematics where, occasionally, pupils of highest ability find the work too easy. In a small minority of lessons, the challenge of planning and setting work for a wide variety of ability groups results in pupils having to wait for a few minutes while the teacher explains a task to another group, having missed the opportunity to ensure that all are fully productively occupied. As a result, the pace of learning slows. Teachers are consistent in providing opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills across the curriculum. Most teachers use assessment well to support learning and plan activities to address mistakes identified from previous work. The marking of literacy work is often exemplary, with opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress and to respond to the comments made by their teachers. This enables them to understand how to improve and re-draft their work in order to attain a higher level.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say that behaviour is good. They receive praise for their good behaviour when they go on trips and their behaviour around the school is polite, welcoming and friendly. Warm relationships between adults and pupils are evident throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is typically good and contributes well to good learning. They are quick to respond to teachers' instructions and the consistent

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behaviour management techniques that teachers employ. Pupils told the inspector that teachers are 'kind and very fair'. Lessons run smoothly and pupils say that disruption is rare. Case study evidence shows that the school provides well for the very few pupils with behaviour difficulties, resulting in improvement over time. Older pupils show maturity and confidence when speaking to adults and are keen to take responsible roles, for example through the school council, the Eco committee or supporting younger ones as buddies. The school has a calm and productive atmosphere and pupils show respect for each other and for adults. They state with confidence that all forms of bullying, including racist behaviour, are rare and that adults support them well.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including with regard to road safety. All parents and carers express confidence that the school keeps their children safe and most say that they behave well. One commented on how their children have 'thrived and benefitted from the 'small family' feel of the school'. Another expressed gratitude for the school's pro-active approach in addressing concerns and providing advice and support. A very few parents and carers expressed concern about poor behaviour, but the inspection found behaviour to be good and those with difficulties to be managed well.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has promoted a strong, teamwork ethos amongst the staff. She, together with the governing body, has effectively involved all stakeholders, including pupils, in establishing a vision for the school's future development so that all share ownership and are able to contribute their ideas. Leaders were quick to respond to the underachievement identified in 2011 and have established robust strategies to improve teaching, providing training, external support, coaching and mentoring. Those teachers who have undergone this process have seen a significant improvement in their practice. The headteacher is also establishing a strong senior team and is building the capacity of middle leaders to be fully accountable for promoting achievement in their areas of responsibility. These leaders expressed their appreciation for the support that has enabled them to be 'able to make a difference'. All teachers are held accountable for pupils' achievement through regular progress meetings. The rapidly accelerating rates of progress and improved teaching demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve.

The governing body is knowledgeable, energetic and involves itself fully in the life of the school, including undertaking lesson observations. The governing body has a very good understanding of the issues facing the school and is fully committed to its further improvement. It uses its broad range of skills and expertise to provide effective support and challenge. It ensures that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and that staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. The school's leaders ensure that the progress of all groups of pupils is analysed carefully, so that all are included and that there is no evidence of discrimination.

The large response to the questionnaire indicates the high level of support of parents

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and carers. Their ambition for the school to continue improving for the benefit of their children is evident. The school works hard to ensure that parents and carers receive regular information, including workshops to enable them to support their children's learning.

The curriculum is good. It is matched to pupils' needs well and topics provide a wide range of opportunities to explore a subject such as 'energy' through a wide range of activities and visits. Leaders have identified that further opportunities to practice mathematical skills in different subjects need to be developed. Displays around the school are lively, exciting and promote curiosity and creativity. A wide range of activities enhances the curriculum, including residential visits and enterprise activities, and pupils enjoy working outdoors wherever possible, including in the 'forest school'. A key strength of the curriculum is its good promotion of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, particularly through its position at the heart of the local community and enhanced by partnerships that have been forged with schools internationally and with a larger inner-city school. This provides pupils with first-hand experience of children in other contexts.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Blakedown CofE Primary School, Kidderminster, DY10 3JN**

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school for its recent inspection. I enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. I particularly enjoyed hearing you sing so enthusiastically in assembly.

You go to a good school. You are making good progress and your attainment is above that of pupils nationally by the time you reach Year 6. You told me that you enjoy your learning and want to do well. The school is well run and leaders have worked hard to ensure that all teaching is good and that you progress well. I have asked them to ensure that your achievement continues to rise quickly. They can do this by making sure that teachers plan activities that provide you with sufficient challenge. I have also asked that they make sure that you are always occupied during a lesson and do not have to wait for others to finish their work before you start something new. You can help by telling your teacher if you are ready for a greater challenge. Teachers provide you with clear targets and give you opportunities to respond to the comments they make when they mark your work, so that you know your next steps in learning.

You behave well and are confident that the school will keep you safe and you know how to keep yourselves safe. You told me how well adults care for you. I was particularly impressed by the work of the Eco committee and the way in which you work together in lessons and support each other. Your attendance is above average.

The curriculum you follow enables you to develop your own ideas and learn about other cultures, but I have asked leaders to make sure you have enough opportunity to develop your numeracy skills in other subjects. The leaders are making sure you continue to learn well, develop well as young people and ensuring your safety. You can help them by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis  
Lead inspector

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