

Inspection of Blackmore Primary School

Nine Ashes Road, Blackmore, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 0QR

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 June 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

At Blackmore Primary, the mantra, 'be the best you can be', is embraced by everyone. This is seen in the choices pupils make. It is also evident in the commitment made by parents to engage in the life of the school.

Pupils develop high levels of empathy. They are alert to how others around them are feeling and are keen to brighten someone else's day. Due to clear, shared expectations among staff and pupils, learning environments are calm and purposeful.

Pupils feel safe across the school site. Their voices are actively listened to because what they think matters. Pupils understand what bullying is, but they struggle to recall any incident like this. They are certain that adults care and respond quickly to resolve any situation where a pupil might be worried or upset.

Pupils benefit from the opportunity to learn about and discuss core values, such as tolerance for others and respect. They have structured opportunities to develop their leadership abilities. Older pupils take on important roles such as house captains and school councillors. Through these they contribute to decision-making, such as which after-school clubs should be available. Their inputs and choices influence the school and wider community.

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

Leaders have continued with a clear vision to establish a bold and adventurous curriculum. This provides pupils with the knowledge and experiences they need to be successful, long into their futures.

Teachers have secure expertise about the subjects they teach. All staff also share a priority to focus on including all pupils and spotting their potential. As a result, lessons are designed that make sure that the new content taught is remembered. Assessment routines are used well. Teachers spot quickly if there are gaps in what pupils know. Lessons are reshaped accordingly and provide an extra chance to revisit these points. Pupils show particularly effective fluency with their mathematics and English knowledge. This is because they get regular chances to rehearse the key bits of knowledge that matter most. There are a few foundation subjects in the curriculum that have been more recently revised. In these lessons, pupils need more opportunities to rehearse and recall the new knowledge they are learning.

Staff have a secure understanding of the individual needs that pupils have. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means pupils with SEND access the same demanding curriculum as their classmates.

Leaders have carefully considered the curriculum for reading. They provide pupils with regular opportunities to learn the basic sounds they need to begin to read.

Pupils that struggle are rapidly identified. Effective extra support is given to help them keep up, including time to read in school. Pupils take home books that include the specific sounds they have recently learned. This means all pupils are given the opportunity to develop confidence with reading.

From the moment children start school, they have meaningful learning opportunities. These tasks help them to explore and become curious. Well-trained adults in the setting use learning and play activities effectively. They take time to observe and listen to what children are saying. They then challenge children to think deeper. Adults expect children to apply the new knowledge they have recently learned.

Pupils are bold when explaining their acceptance of each other's differences. They are committed to celebrate the diversity in their world, without hesitation. This leads to interactions, both in class and at play, that are highly respectful. Older pupils expertly lead play activities. They show good understanding for the needs of their younger peers. All pupils benefit from this interaction.

Attending visits and clubs are opportunities available to all pupils. They value these experiences and can describe the benefits. For example, pupils could identify clubs they had attended that inspired them. They explain how it introduced them to skills they now identify as a talent or life-long interest.

Attitudes to learning are positive and are a focus from the moment pupils start school. Pupils are resilient. They work well together and use teamwork to tackle challenges in their learning. Through planned activities, pupils learn age-appropriate information that supports longer-term development. This includes knowledge about how they can care for their mental health.

Leaders, including governors have continued to prioritise the experiences of pupils in the school. Staff, pupils, and their families are appreciative of the steadfast commitment of leaders. They can see the impact of leaders' focus on the issues that matter most to pupils, including the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an established culture of safeguarding across the school. Pupils are well known to adults, who are alert to pupils' needs and anxieties. All staff have the expertise they need to keep pupils safe.

Leaders are proactive to ensure that concerns or risks to pupils do not escalate. They have a clear understanding of the guidance and professional support available. Strong connections with families mean leaders are accessible and trusted. They provide reassurance and signpost parents to appropriate services outside school if needed. Parents value this.

Through lessons and assemblies, pupils gain specific knowledge that contributes to their well-being and personal safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of foundation subjects in the curriculum have been more recently adapted and improved. Currently in these subjects, pupils do not have regular enough opportunities to practise recalling and applying knowledge they are learning. This leads to some minor variation in what pupils can confidently retrieve and remember. Leaders should continue the work started to ensure that all curriculum plans detail the most important knowledge that pupils should remember and recall fluently. Teachers can then support pupils to consolidate this knowledge in preparation for future learning.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	114929
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10227246
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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Snelling
Headteacher	Andrea Farrant
Website	www.blackmore.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not currently use any alternative provision to meet the needs of pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The lead inspector also spoke with a school improvement partner and a school effectiveness partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with eight members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited a sample of lessons where possible,

spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and where relevant, looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The lead inspector met with two designated safeguarding leads, the school business manager, and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Inspectors considered 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 47 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. Inspectors considered 42 responses to a pupil survey and also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site.

Inspection team

Kristian Hewitt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Wayne Jarvis

Her Majesty's Inspector

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