

# Inspection of Bledington Primary School

Old Burford Road, Bledington, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 6US

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b> |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b> |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b> |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b> |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b> |
| Previous inspection grade | Outstanding |

The school was last inspected 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to attend Bledington Primary School. Staff encourage pupils to live out the school's motto of 'enjoy, engage and challenge'. Pupils say it feels like a family here. They appreciate that their ideas and opinions are valued. For example, the school community votes for pupil leaders such as eco-councillors.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. They do. Pupils are kind and caring towards one another. Leaders have high ambition for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have made changes to the curriculum that are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Staff encourage pupils to develop many interests beyond the academic. Leaders have forged several links with the local community, such as the village music festival, fete and Maypole extravaganza. Pupils take part in oracy competitions and sports fixtures.

Parents are positive about the school. They say that staff know their children well and that they are encouraged to be 'the best versions of themselves'. Parents are complimentary about the school's enrichment offer, including coding, jewellery making and mystery clubs.

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

Children learn to read as soon as they start school. They learn phonics every day. Staff have been well trained to teach phonics. Pupils take home books that help them to practise the sounds they have learned so they develop confidence. Staff regularly check how well pupils are learning to read. Any pupils who need further help receive prompt support. Teachers read to pupils every day. Reading tea parties and challenges to recreate book covers encourage a love for reading.

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum. They have set out the order of knowledge they want pupils to learn from the early years to Year 6. Teachers know what to teach and when. Consequently, pupils' knowledge builds, and they achieve well. In most subjects, leaders assess how well the curriculum is being implemented. For example, in modern foreign languages (MFL), leaders gathered pupils' feedback and refined the curriculum. This resulted in pupils being able to remember more over time. In mathematics, however, subject leaders have not regularly checked how teachers deliver the curriculum and use assessment. This means they have not been able to refine the curriculum as well as they have in other subjects.

Staff include pupils with SEND in all activities on offer at Bledington. They have effective systems in place to identify any pupils with SEND. Staff provide support for those who need additional help so that they can learn well.

Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can learn. Pupils rise to these expectations. They learn well from the curriculum. However, this is not always reflected in their written work. Teachers do not always ensure all pupils' presentation and writing are sufficiently accurate. On occasion, some pupils' incorrect grammar, punctuation and letter formation go unnoticed.

Leaders have thought carefully about the learning environment throughout the school. This is particularly the case in the early years, where there is a language-rich environment. All areas within the provision are well thought out and resourced. These resources are used to support learning well. Staff plan activities to build precisely on what children need to work on. Children are confident to share their ideas, for example, when thinking about questions to ask when planning a story about pirates. Children leave Reception Year ready for their next stage of education.

Pupils' positive behaviour goes beyond the classroom. They share and take turns. At lunch, pupils sit in mixed-age groups so that older pupils can model expectations for younger pupils. Pupils enjoy this. Children in the early years learn routines quickly. Pupils behave well during all aspects of the school day.

Leaders enhance the curriculum through trips and activities, such as sculpture and musical workshops and visits to the local organic farm. Staff encourage pupils to keep physically and mentally healthy. Pupils particularly enjoy the 'rainbow room' sessions where they can share how they feel. This wider work supports them to become confident learners.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They work in partnership with the local authority well and act on feedback. Leaders and governors are mindful of staff workload. Staff feel supported and appreciate leaders' consideration for their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know their role in keeping pupils safe. They prioritise safeguarding. Leaders train staff regularly. This training includes identifying the indicators of abuse. Staff know these signs and what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders act appropriately on any concerns and make sure pupils get the support they need.

Staff support pupils' emotional needs well. This means pupils feel safe at school. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any worries.

Through the curriculum, staff teach pupils about issues such as sun, road and online safety.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In mathematics, leaders' understanding of how well pupils have learned the curriculum is at an early stage. This hinders leaders' ability to refine the curriculum and how assessment is used so that pupils know and remember more. Leaders need to ensure that all subject leaders evaluate the implementation of the planned curriculum.
- Teachers do not always have high expectations for all pupils' writing and presentation. Some pupils' handwriting, grammar and punctuation skills are not developed consistently well across all year groups. Leaders must ensure that staff focus on developing accurate letter formation and raise expectations of pupils' handwriting, grammar and punctuation skills.

## **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](#)' 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 115505   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Gloucestershire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10267908   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 76   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Sarah Newton   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jill Kewley  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.bledington.gloucs.sch.uk">www.bledington.gloucs.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 20 January 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                     |

## Information about this school

- There have been changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in September 2015.
- There is a before-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and MFL. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, 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 listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. They looked at the school's single central record and records of concerns and how staff work to keep pupils safe. The inspectors talked to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding practices.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtimes and breaktimes. In addition, they met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They looked at responses to the surveys for pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorna Buchanan

Ofsted Inspector

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