

Inspection of a good school: John Blandy Primary School

Laurel Drive, Southmoor, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 5DJ

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Outcome

John Blandy Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Strong relationships underpin life at John Blandy. Leaders know every family within this village school. Staff provide a high level of care to each other, parents and the pupils. Pupils describe their school as a warm, supportive place where everyone is looked after. A pupil summarised this by saying, 'If you are feeling low, there is always a special person to help you, and this makes me feel really happy. Sometimes all I need is a smile to make me feel better.'

Pupils display the school values of 'belong, believe, brilliance' in all they do. Pupils are keen to succeed. They work hard in lessons and value the different learning challenges teachers give them.

Leaders recognise the need to build the wider character of pupils. Leaders plan a range of additional activities, including pupil leadership roles. Pupils enjoy their added responsibilities and use these to help develop the school community. These roles also support pupils in feeling safe in school. They describe their school as friendly and say when there are incidents; playground mentors help to resolve them. Bullying is not a problem. Pupils are confident that if there was an incident, staff would swiftly sort it out.

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

Leaders are determined that pupils will develop brilliance across the curriculum. They want all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils to find 'their something special to shine in'. Consequently, pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders provide valuable support to help staff identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This enables all pupils to learn with their friends in class, regardless of their ability.

Leaders are clear in their intention to ensure pupils are 'flourishing readers'. Therefore, leaders have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders make sure that teachers and other staff are well trained to support pupils in learning to read. All staff

consistently apply the agreed phonic strategies to support the development of early reading. Phonics is taught as soon as the children start school. Pupils are able to use their phonic knowledge independently to read a range of books. Pupils display a love of reading and enjoy selecting books from the library or classroom reading corners to develop their interests. They read regularly at school and at home and can explain their favourite books. In key stage 2, daily reading helps pupils to develop their fluency and comprehension skills. They talk knowledgeably about the books that teachers read to them in class.

Mathematics is carefully sequenced and taught well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge because of the support received from leaders. During lessons, pupils revisit previous knowledge to help them learn new information. Pupils use this to help them understand how well they are doing. Teachers' skilful use of questioning helps them assess understanding and plan subsequent lessons and activities.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders began work to re-sequence the curriculum from Reception to Year 6. This sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn and when they should learn it. Leaders recognise that some of the foundation subjects are not yet fully implemented. This is because some curriculum leaders are new to their roles and are finalising curriculum planning. As a result, lessons do not always build precisely on prior learning.

Pupils behave very well and the school is calm. Pupils readily support one another either socially or in lessons. Routines are well established across the school. In Reception, children are able to select their learning activities, either inside or outside, and work independently.

Leaders recognise the impact of COVID-19 on opportunities and have reintroduced a range of curricular-based trips and visits for pupils. Many pupils have spoken excitedly about these. Pupils in Year 6 were able to use their recent visit to Hill End to describe the life of soldiers in the trenches during World War One. Leaders recognise the importance of keeping pupils connected to the local community. To enable this to happen, the school hosted a virtual harvest festival. Pupils understand the need to work together to support others in society less fortunate than themselves. Pupils proudly support the school's charity events. Leaders are thinking ahead and have a clear plan of all the enhancements they would like to offer, including expanding the range of after-school activities.

Staff are proud to work at John Blandy. They value the opportunities to enable them to develop professionally. Leaders, governors and trustees provide support for staff in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training. They know the children well and are vigilant, seeking to spot any

change in a pupil's behaviour. Staff use the internal systems to report any concerns to leaders. Leaders respond swiftly and make referrals to external agencies as needed.

Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe online and out in the village. Pupils recognise the importance of good mental health.

Governors support leaders well, review documentation and carry out checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not fully embedded in every subject. This means that pupils are not yet able to build up their knowledge over time. Leaders must continue to carefully monitor curriculum leaders to ensure the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn is clearly identified and assessed. This will help pupils build on prior knowledge and skills in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 29 November 2016.

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

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| Unique reference number | 140307 |
| Local authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10200422 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 239 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Lucie Belcher |
| Headteacher | Suzanne Elliott |
| Website | www.johnblandyprimary.org.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 29 and 30 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2021 and a new senior leadership team structure was formed.
- The school is part of the Faringdon Learning Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of teaching and support staff. Meetings were also held with the chief executive officer and members of the local governing board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum

plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about geography and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the school's policies, procedures for recruiting staff, the quality of record keeping of concerns about pupil's welfare and safety. The inspector spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers at the end of the first day of the inspection. She considered the 35 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including 22 free-text comments. The inspector also considered the 28 responses from the confidential staff survey, as well as the 30 responses from pupils and took into account views shared throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Tracey Bowen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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