

Inspection of The Blue School CofE Primary

North Street, Isleworth TW7 6RQ

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 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 happy and safe in this nurturing environment. They are supported by adults that care for them well. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities on offer, such as musical instrument tuition. They are proud of their school and strive to make it even better. For example, every pupil in Year 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), takes on a leadership role.

Leaders make sure that pupils study a wide range of subjects. They expect pupils to work hard and produce work of a high quality, and they do. Pupils are encouraged to contribute positively to society and encourage others to do the same. For example, they enjoy looking after the environment beyond their school gates and visiting residents at the local care home.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and welcoming to all. Bullying is uncommon. School council members are currently involved in making a video to make sure that everyone understands what bullying is and what it is not. If bullying does occur, adults resolve incidents quickly, making sure that all those involved understand the steps taken.

Parents and carers view the school positively. They typically said that their children are happy and well looked after. They value the 'buddy' programme and how this supports positive interactions between older and younger pupils.

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

Leaders have planned and sequenced a broad curriculum, which is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. The curriculum in the early years lays the foundations for what is taught next. For example, children in the Nursery learn directional vocabulary, such as 'forwards backwards, left' and 'right'. In Year 1, pupils use this knowledge to manipulate programmable robots around a board in computing.

As pupils move up through the school, they continue to use what they have previously learned to help with what comes next. They readily transfer knowledge and skills. For example, in computing, pupils' familiarity with coding in one program supports them to learn coding on a more intricate platform later on. Where older pupils have missed some learning, teachers are quick to recognise this and adapt activities to ensure that these gaps are filled.

In mathematics, teachers structure learning, so that pupils build their knowledge and skills securely and steadily. They present information clearly and check pupils' understanding, for instance, through questioning and end of unit quizzes. Pupils use mathematical language confidently to speak about their learning.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils including those with SEND. They identify pupils' needs effectively and train teachers to use a range of strategies to maximise pupils' independence and learning of the curriculum.

Children begin to learn the sounds that letters make in the Nursery year. Leaders have made sure that the phonics programme is embedded. Staff have received training to teach phonics effectively. While this supports most pupils to read fluently, there are inconsistencies in how well weaker readers are supported to catch up. For example, when pupils mispronounce sounds, their mistakes are not routinely identified and corrected. Similarly, staff do not consistently match the books that these pupils read to the sounds they have learned. This means these pupils are not supported sufficiently to catch up quickly and become fluent and confident readers.

Pupils are motivated and positive about their learning. Leaders, together with all staff, have created a respectful school culture. Lessons proceed purposefully and without any low-level disruption to learning. Pupils learn about tolerance. They are taught to respect difference. Pupils were unanimous that difference should be celebrated and not something to discriminate against.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities in the school. For example, every pupil in Year 6 has a leadership role. These are meaningful opportunities, which are designed to support pupils with their character development. For example, some pupils take on the role of news leaders. They learn about journalism and create newsletters for the community. Other pupils take a lead on the curriculum, promoting work achieved across the school. Pupils also get involved in leading weekly assemblies.

Pupils are actively encouraged to contribute to the community beyond the school gates. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 participate in a young leaders' award that aims to transform society and encourage others to do the same. Two examples include litter picking in the local open spaces and visiting residents in a local care home. Pupils are articulate and confident to speak about their learning and the culture of their school.

Staff feel valued, supported and nurtured by senior leaders. They are positive about the approach leaders take to reduce workload and promote well-being. Leaders invest in staff. They coach newer teachers and ensure that they are well prepared to take on leadership responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive regular and up-to-date training to help keep pupils safe. They know what signs pupils may display if they are at risk of harm and what action they should take. Leaders make referrals to external agencies to secure the additional help that pupils at risk need.

Pupils learn how to use the internet safely. They learn practical strategies to support online safety, such as installing firewalls on to devices. Pupils explained that they would tell an adult if they felt worried or unsafe.

Governors ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are made on all staff.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders train and support staff to deliver the systematic synthetic phonics programme as intended. As a result, most staff have the expertise to help pupils learn to read well. In a small number of cases, pupils are not having mispronunciations corrected quickly enough, or reading books consistently well-matched to the sounds they know. Leaders should continue to strengthen all staff's expertise in teaching phonics to ensure that all pupils learn to read quickly and fluently.

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

Unique reference number	102523
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10228690
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephanie Ajayi
Headteacher	Rachel Jones
Website	www.theblueschool.com
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2008 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has expanded from one to two forms of entry.
- The current headteacher took up post in April 2018.
- The school's section 48 inspection took place on 25 April 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, computing and, art and design. 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.

- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to find out how the school supports pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum. This involved reviewing documentation to see how pupils with SEND were being supported.
- The lead inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair, a representative from both the local authority, and from the Diocese of London.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' personal development. Discussions were held with several groups of pupils about their views of their school.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, staff and parents through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Alison Colenso, lead inspector

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