

Blackhorse Primary School

URN: 149946 | Inspected: 25 November 2025

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. This is reflected in pupils' attainment in the school's published outcomes. Vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress well through the curriculum from their starting points. This means that pupils are well prepared for their next phase of education. Most pupils gain the foundations they need in language, communication and vocabulary. They develop fluency and accuracy in word reading and spelling. This helps them to be confident readers and, overall, competent writers. Pupils generally develop appropriate knowledge and skills across curriculum subjects. For example, pupils practise their number recall and timetables facts in order to tackle more complex concepts. However, there are still some pupils who do not build the depth of knowledge they need across some wider curriculum subjects. These pupils do not successfully build on or make links to their prior learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders diligently check the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They use this information, alongside what they know about the context of the school, to design a well-sequenced and progressive curriculum. This starts in the early years. Leaders make sure that teachers have the expertise they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Most teachers model new ideas clearly and develop pupils' subject-specific vocabulary well. For example, when discussing the class text, pupils use words such as 'guilt' and 'tiredness' to interpret feelings in relation to the complexities of war. Leaders prioritise teaching pupils the most important knowledge and skills they need to succeed. This ensures that most pupils develop their handwriting, spelling, reading and knowledge of number well. Pupils who need additional support with reading receive the help they require to catch up quickly. This develops their confidence and a love of reading. Teachers typically check pupils' understanding in lessons. However, some of these checks lack precision. This means that for some pupils, misconceptions are not addressed as swiftly as they could be. When this happens, some of the gaps in pupils' knowledge persist. Teachers understand pupils' individual needs. They routinely adapt learning activities so that the most vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can access learning fully and achieve well alongside their peers.

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Early years

Expected standard

The school has a clear vision for providing children in the early years with the care and support they need. Staff work closely with parents and carers. This helps them to get to know the children as the individuals they are. Children settle quickly and enjoy their learning, and most are well prepared for Year 1. The early years curriculum makes clear the important knowledge that children need to learn. Typically, children benefit from the school's focus on developing their communication and social skills. They learn to use a correct pencil grip, form letters correctly and show an increasing understanding of their emotions. Staff maximise opportunities, through their interactions, to build children's vocabulary. For example, children confidently use words such as 'full' and 'empty' when filling water containers. Reading is a priority in the Reception Year. Staff routinely check children's phonics understanding and use this information to close any gaps that occur. As a result, most children learn and remember new sounds well. On occasion, these checks are less effective, and some staff do not spot or address errors in children's phonics knowledge as they arise. Therefore, some children do not develop the strong foundational skills they need for future learning.

Inclusion

Strong standard

The school is highly inclusive. The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those in receipt of pupil premium funding is a significant strength. Staff have an accurate and detailed understanding of the needs of pupils in the well-established 'Resource Base'. Where appropriate, these pupils, often with more complex needs, integrate successfully into classes with their peers. This helps pupils to feel a strong sense of belonging. Leaders work closely with teachers to identify the needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and effectively. Teachers use this information to deliver effective targeted support that helps pupils to succeed. Where necessary, staff make adjustments and adaptations in collaboration with external specialists. Termly 'surgeries' provide helpful guidance, including input from speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. This ensures that staff have the knowledge required to meet pupils' needs well. Leaders rigorously monitor the impact of these approaches and refine practice where needed. Staff receive further regular training to deepen their understanding of pupils' diverse needs. This enables them to successfully implement more personalised support when needed. Leaders implement and monitor the pupil premium strategy with rigour. This removes any barriers or challenges pupils face to their learning or wellbeing. In addition, the school makes effective use of alternative provision to enhance pupils' experiences and support their wider needs. It works collaboratively with these providers to ensure that pupils fully benefit from this experience.

Personal development and well-being Strong standard The school's mantra of 'champions are built, not born' is central to its personal development offer. There is a deliberate intention to provide pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, with a comprehensive range of enrichment opportunities that foster their sense of achievement and belonging. Leaders prioritise the development of pupils' artistic, musical and sporting passions. Pupils take pride in being part of the 'track team'. They enjoy learning to play musical instruments, such as the

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recorder, or taking part in musical theatre. This develops pupils' confidence and builds their self-esteem. The personal, social and health education offer provides pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to successfully take their place in modern Britain. Older pupils develop their social skills when reading to younger children. Pupils gain a deep understanding of diversity and equality. They know why it is important to treat everyone with respect and kindness. Pupils develop their understanding of the fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. They know how these values ensure that everyone has a voice, and they understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils develop a sense of citizenship by visiting care homes or when singing as part of the school choir to members of the local community. The wider relationships curriculum enables pupils from an early age to understand the qualities of what makes a good friend. Pupils appreciate that all families are different. Older pupils talk with maturity about valuing everyone's unique characteristics. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs and trips on offer to them. These include sports such as football, visits to the library and visits to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils value the opportunities given to develop their leadership skills. They talk positively about how their roles as 'play pod' leaders, 'reading rangers' and 'mission masters' enable them to help others. Expected standard

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and trustees are highly ambitious for the school and the community it serves. Pupils and families are at the centre of the decisions they make. Leaders and trustees act in the best interests of all pupils. This is particularly the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged. Pupils flourish and develop the confidence and resilience they need to embrace new challenges. With the support of the trust, leaders have a detailed understanding of the school's context. Leaders accurately identify key priorities and take measured actions to address these. Trustees and local governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively and hold leaders at all levels to account. They ensure that the school's vision and mission are tangible and understood by all stakeholders. Leaders and staff benefit from a high-quality, research-informed professional learning programme. This builds their confidence to carry out their roles effectively. Staff, including those who are new to teaching, feel proud to work at the school. They feel valued and appreciate how leaders and members of the trust consider their workload and support their wellbeing. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about many aspects of the school's work. One parent's comment, which was typical of many, was, 'The school offers a welcoming culture that supports both academic progress and wider interests such as sports, art and music.'

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils arrive at Blackhorse Primary School with a skip in their step and smiles on their faces. They feel valued. They form strong and respectful relationships with staff. Staff skilfully remove any barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that pupils thrive, succeed and feel safe. The school's mission, 'to build champion learners', is a golden thread that runs throughout all aspects of school life. The values of respect, pride, bravery and success underpin this. Pupils bring these values to life through their eagerness to do well and their day-to-day interactions with one another.

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Classrooms are purposeful and productive. Across the school, pupils enjoy their learning, achieve and attend well. Published national outcomes reflect this. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils demonstrate the school rules of 'ready, respectful and safe', both inside and outside of the classroom. This begins in the early years, where children quickly learn the routines and typically follow the school's high expectations for their behaviour and conduct. Pupils enjoy spending time together during social times. Bullying is rare. Pupils feel confident that staff will address this swiftly should it occur. Pupils benefit greatly from the school's extensive wider offer. Opportunities to develop their talents and interests are plentiful, ranging from sports to creative arts. This ensures that pupils develop confidence, broaden their horizons and discover new passions beyond the classroom. Pupils take great pride in the roles and responsibilities they have. They know that through their leadership roles, they can influence change and make a difference. For example, the 'mission masters' successfully introduced a buddy system and continue to make changes around the school to improve the environment.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is used consistently well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge across wider curriculum subjects.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils build a depth of knowledge and skills across the curriculum so that they consistently achieve well.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders know their pupils' families well. A strong, pastoral approach supports pupils, helping to remove any barriers in coming to school. Leaders rigorously analyse attendance data. They identify trends and patterns in groups and for individuals. Leaders are relentless in their approach. They take swift and effective action if attendance becomes a concern. Pupils' attendance, most notably for those who are disadvantaged, is improving. The school fosters a highly positive culture for learning, maintaining a calm and purposeful environment. Staff implement the school's approach to behaviour with kindness and sensitivity. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline and maturity. In the classroom, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully, work hard and are supportive of each other. On the playground, pupils' respectful and considerate behaviour continues. Discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils know that there is always someone to help them if needed. All age groups play together harmoniously. The school's inclusive ethos ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, participate fully in school life. Staff ensure that pupils who need help to manage and understand their emotions receive the support they need.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

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<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/blackhorse-primary-school-bristol>