

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Blue Coat Church of England Aided Junior School

Springhill Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS1 2LP

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 March 2025

## **Outcome**

Blue Coat Church of England Aided Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

Everyone at Blue Coat wants pupils to 'let their light shine'. Pupils become well-rounded and confident individuals. They are happy in school and feel safe. They know they can talk to an adult in school if they have any concerns. 'Heart-warming, caring, and kind' were just some of the words used by pupils when they were asked about their school.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils work hard and achieve well by the end of Year 6. They are attentive in lessons. Pupils listen carefully to adults and each other. They participate in discussions respectfully. At playtimes, the vast majority play together well. Staff are on hand if they need them.

Music is of high importance. Every pupil in Years 5 and 6 has the opportunity to learn to play an instrument and gain an accreditation. Pupils demonstrate exceptional patience and resilience when learning to play instruments such as steel pans, violin, clarinet or trumpet. They relish performing the pieces they have learned to parents and visitors.

Pupils are proud to share their learning as part of the many parent and carer workshops on offer. Parents appreciate these opportunities, which help them support their child's learning at home.

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

The carefully designed curriculum ensures pupils achieve well over time and are fully prepared for secondary school. In lessons, staff model spoken language clearly. They ask open-ended questions and introduce pupils to new and ambitious words. As a result, pupils learn to speak confidently. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary when talking

about different subjects. For example, in history, pupils explained articulately the difference between the monarchy in Britain and the pharaohs of ancient Egypt.

The school uses a wide range of strategies to check what pupils know and remember. Teachers use this information to adjust their explanations and to identify and address any gaps in learning. However, there are some inconsistencies in how pupils' prior learning is checked in mathematics. Sometimes, checks and explanations are rushed. On these occasions, pupils are moved on to new learning before they are ready. For some pupils, this leads to confusion.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the most vulnerable make strong gains in their knowledge from joining the school. The needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly. They are well supported in lessons. Activities are carefully adapted. When necessary, pupils are provided with the appropriate equipment to help them learn. Those who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) benefit from a curriculum tailored to their individual needs. Targeted support helps pupils to close gaps in their learning quickly. The school ensures these pupils are supported to take part in all aspects of school life, for example attending clubs and taking part in educational visits.

Effective transition from the infant school ensures that no time is lost in ensuring pupils who need extra help with reading receive this quickly. As a result, pupils learn to read fluently and with expression. A love of reading is promoted across different subjects. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading stories and informational texts.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond Blue Coat. They know how to stay safe, including online. Pupils speak maturely about respecting others, valuing differences and being kind. At social times, most pupils conduct themselves well. Pupils who need help with managing their emotions access high-quality pastoral support. This helps them to regulate their behaviour. At lunchtime, the playground is very busy. This means some pupils do not have the opportunity to play their own games or make use of the play equipment.

Strong and reflective leaders and governors continually seek to improve the quality of education for pupils. They have an accurate and shared understanding of the school's strengths and priorities. Governors use their expertise well to support and challenge the school effectively. The vast majority of staff are positive about the support they receive for their workload and feel well supported in their roles.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- On occasion, gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding are not addressed and some

pupils are moved on to new concepts too quickly. As a result, some pupils are left confused and unclear about what they need to do when asked to complete work independently. The school should ensure that staff consistently make thorough checks on pupils' learning to address misconceptions effectively and adapt teaching accordingly.

- During lunchtimes, the playground space becomes overly busy and dominated by some pupils involved in a limited number of activities. This restricts the playing space for others. The school should ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to play games and use the available equipment, providing pupils with a chance to develop important social skills at these unstructured times.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2019.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104230
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10343796
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	362
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Anita Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Orlik (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bluecoatfederation.co.uk">www.bluecoatfederation.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 April 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Blue Coat Church of England Aided Junior School is federated with Blue Coat Church of England Aided Infant School. The executive headteacher oversees the work of both schools.
- The school, in partnership with the local authority, opened a specially resourced provision in January 2025. 'The Ark' provides education for pupils with an education, health and care plan for speech, language and communication needs. It caters for 16 pupils of primary-school age.
- This is a voluntary-aided school in the Diocese of Lichfield. The last section 48 inspection was in January 2020. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of this date.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic

began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, two executive deputy headteachers, other school leaders and a group of staff.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- The inspector had a telephone conversation with a local authority representative and a diocese representative.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons in the main school and the specially resourced provision.
- The inspector spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, when moving around the school and during breaktimes. The inspector also considered a range of documents and other information about the behaviour, attitudes and the personal development of pupils.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, pupils and parents. The inspector also considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Usha Devi, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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