

Characteristics

Blackmarston School is a Primary Special School that makes provision for pupils aged 2-11 years with a diverse range of special educational needs and learning disabilities; predominantly severe, profound and complex.

The school currently has 96 pupils on roll. The number of pupils on roll for the early years and primary phase has remained almost static over the past 5 years.

The catchment for the school is predominantly rural and extends across the county of Herefordshire.

All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan .

Ofsted Context

In June 2023, Blackmarston was judged to have serious weaknesses by Ofsted, with concerns raised around leadership, curriculum development, and consistency in teaching. However, the January 2025 Ofsted Monitoring Visit highlighted significant progress:

- A new leadership structure, including an Interim Executive Board (IEB) and newly appointed middle leaders, has brought stability and clarity to the school.
- The acting headteacher and deputy have introduced a coaching and team-teaching model that is improving staff confidence and consistency.
- The phonics and early reading curriculum is now well-structured and effectively delivered, with pupils showing clear progress.
- Staff training has been strengthened, and there is a renewed focus on meeting individual needs through high-quality planning and resources.
- Leaders have a clear moral purpose and are committed to ensuring that every pupil is known, understood, and supported to thrive.

Ofsted noted that “staff shared a common consensus that there ‘has been a breath of life put into the school’ and for that they are proud”

Looking Ahead

Blackmarston is on a journey of transformation. We are seeking a visionary and compassionate Headteacher who can build on the progress made, lead curriculum development, and inspire excellence across the school. This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of a school that is deeply committed to its pupils and community.

Breakdown of SEN within current Blackmarston cohort	
Special Education Need	% of pupils with this need
Autistic Disorder	52.08%
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties	12.50%
Speech, Language & Communication Needs	30.21%
Severe Learning Difficulties	34.38%
Vision Impairment	2.08%
Hearing Impairment	1.04%