

Inspection of Little Bowden School

Scotland Road, Little Bowden, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 8AY

Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this vibrant school. There are positive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are kind to each other. They enjoy collaborating with partners in the classroom and demonstrate this well from the early years. The school places a strong focus on developing pupils' resilience so that they learn to 'bounce back' from setbacks. This helps pupils have positive attitudes to their learning.

The school has high expectations of pupils. The school's recent focus on the curriculum means that staff understand exactly what pupils need to learn and remember. This new approach is ambitious and helps the school to achieve its vision of 'working together to love learning'.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their work. Many pupils feel that teachers make learning fun and interesting. This helps pupils remember some of the important information that they must know before they can move to the next stage.

Pupils feel safe. They know they can share any potential worries with trusted adults in school, who will sort things out quickly. The pastoral team works effectively with pupils and families when they need additional support.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as becoming play leaders or librarians.

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

The school's aim for the curriculum to be 'ambitious, memorable and diverse' is beginning to be realised. External advice has helped the school to make improvements. The new curriculum design helps pupils make connections in their learning. Pupils can remember key knowledge and retrieve facts and information. As a result, pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. However, in a few subjects, the school has not checked if the new curriculum is being delivered effectively.

In lessons, pupils access a wide range of activities that stimulate their curiosity. Staff use questions effectively to encourage pupils to share their ideas. Demonstrations help pupils understand how to apply their knowledge in their independent work. However, checks made by staff do not always identify when pupils need more help or when they are ready to think more deeply.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are proud of the work they produce. Carefully chosen resources help pupils develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills, especially in mathematics. Children in the early years receive a strong start to their education. They enjoy hunting for letters in the slime and making patterns with pegboards.

Pupils learn to read quickly. Staff receive appropriate training so that they teach the phonics scheme consistently. Frequent checks on the sounds that pupils know help to ensure that teaching is tailored to the needs of every child. A wide range of additional

support is in place for pupils who need support learning their letter sounds. Pupils enjoy their 'quarter-to-three, read with me' time, which develops their love of reading.

New systems have been introduced to help staff identify sooner pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils with SEND are supported well in lessons. Staff are knowledgeable about the ways that they can offer additional help. Work is adapted carefully so that these pupils can access learning that is matched closely to their ability.

Pupils are encouraged to share their feelings during well-being checks. The school uses these checks to identify any pupils who might need more help to manage their emotions, including from external organisations. As a result, pupils with complex learning or social, emotional and mental health needs are well supported. The recent revival of the 'Routes to Resilience' programme is starting to help pupils reflect and develop the skills they need to overcome personal challenges.

Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures, and they enjoy learning Mandarin. They understand the importance of treating each other with respect. Pupils know how to develop positive relationships with each other. Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs and sports on offer to develop their interests. They are proud of the trophies they win at local tournaments and enjoy performing musical pieces as part of the school orchestra.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They know that their workload and well-being are well considered. Staff access a wide range of training to support them in their roles. Governors work closely with the school and have a strong understanding of its work. They fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, checks of what pupils have learned are not used well enough to identify their next steps. This means that, sometimes, the work that pupils complete does not address their misconceptions or extend their thinking well enough. The school should ensure that staff use checks of pupils' learning effectively in each subject, so that planned activities meet the needs of all pupils.
- The school has not checked if the curriculum is being delivered effectively in the more recently developed subjects. As a result, the school is not able to identify the successes and next steps for these subjects. The school should act swiftly to ensure that the curriculum is being taught well in every subject.

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

Unique reference number	119936
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10347396
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Pollard
Headteacher	Brendan Brannigan
Website	www.littlebowden.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and with other leaders. The lead inspector met

with those responsible for governance, including the chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector also held a discussion with a local authority representative.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors observed some pupils read to a familiar member of staff.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and at other times of the day around school. Inspectors met with those responsible for behaviour, attendance and personal development. A team inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their personal development and completed a tour of the school with pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, as well as information about governance. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector spoke to the manager of the alternative provision provider.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Sadler, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chrissie Barrington	Ofsted Inspector
Jason Brooks	Ofsted Inspector

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