

Robert Bakewell Primary School

Barsby Drive, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 5UJ

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning in English is not consistently good in all year groups. Some pupils do not make the progress they should in reading and writing.
- Some teachers do not plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities in English. Some pupils are not engaged or challenged in these lessons.
- Teachers do not always spot errors in pupils' understanding quickly enough. As a result, some pupils' misconceptions are not addressed, particularly in English.
- The teaching of reading in key stage 1 is not effective in developing pupils' understanding of what they read.
- Although improving, behaviour is not consistently good throughout the school. There are some instances where pupils' learning is disrupted by others.
- Despite improvements, the attendance of pupils is still below the national average. Some pupils still do not attend school regularly enough.
- There are too few opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to learn about other cultures and faiths in sufficient depth.
- Leaders do not use pupil premium funding effectively enough to improve some disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in writing. Consequently, these pupils do not attain as well as other pupils in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and management are good. Leaders and trustees are taking rapid and effective action to improve areas of weakness.
- The school is inclusive and values every pupil. There is a strong safeguarding culture.
- The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is strong. Pupils achieve well in this subject.
- Leaders have maintained the outstanding quality of education that children receive in the early years. From low starting points, children make very strong progress in all areas of learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management and improve outcomes by ensuring that:
 - additional funding is used more effectively to reduce the gap in attainment in writing between disadvantaged pupils and others
 - provision to develop pupils' cultural understanding is improved so that pupils have more opportunities to learn about other faiths in sufficient depth.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment in English and improve outcomes by ensuring that teachers:
 - increase pupils' engagement in learning by carefully matching tasks to the needs, interests and abilities of pupils so that they maintain concentration throughout lessons and make better progress
 - act quickly to identify and address errors and misconceptions in pupils' understanding
 - develop pupils' reading comprehension skills in key stage 1 so that pupils have a better understanding of what they read.
- Improve the effectiveness of personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - leaders and staff continue to reduce the number of incidents of poor behaviour that disrupt the learning of other pupils during lessons
 - leaders continue to improve the attendance of those pupils who do not attend school regularly enough.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour in the school. The recently appointed headteacher, along with other senior leaders and trustees, has acted swiftly to ensure that robust plans and systems are in place to tackle areas of weakness. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness requires improvement, but the quality of education pupils receive is rapidly improving because of effective leadership and management.
- The headteacher, supported by trustees, is passionate in the school's drive to be inclusive and aspirational. Leaders ensure that every pupil is valued as an individual and given the opportunity to learn and succeed while in school. Most parents and carers agree that leadership is effective. As one parent said, 'Since the appointment of Mr Bishop, there has been a marked improvement in the quality of leadership at the school.'
- There has been some turbulence in staffing, particularly within the leadership team, over the past year. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, has managed change effectively and continued to build further leadership capacity at all levels. For example, a newly formed middle leadership team is in place and driving standards upwards in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have cultivated a cohesive team of staff who share the ambitions of senior leaders. Staff morale has improved and many staff value the support of leaders and the training opportunities available. As one member of staff said: 'Leaders are incredibly supportive. They work hard to ensure that we have a good work-life balance.'
- Since appointment, leaders have worked with determination to successfully address some of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. For example, leaders complete rigorous monitoring and evaluation activities to more effectively identify and improve weaker aspects of teaching and learning. Consequently, leaders are quick to provide tailored professional development and 'buddy' coaching for teachers to improve their practice.
- The leadership of mathematics is effective. Leaders have redesigned the mathematics curriculum to ensure that teachers have more opportunities to teach pupils how to problem-solve and reason mathematically. As a result, the quality of teaching in mathematics is a strength of the school and pupils make strong progress in all year groups.
- The leadership of English is improving under the direction of the deputy headteacher. Leaders are continuing to embed strategies to develop the reading curriculum and improve the progress of pupils in this subject. For example, leaders have effectively trained staff in the 'eight reading strategies' and ensure that these are consistently used by staff to develop pupils' inference and deduction skills. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning in reading in key stage 2 is rapidly improving.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Leaders have robust systems in place to identify pupils with SEND and monitor

the progress they make. Leaders use additional funding wisely to provide bespoke small-group and one-to-one support for pupils with SEND. Leaders work effectively with external agencies such as educational psychologists, specialist counselling services, autism spectrum disorder outreach services and the local special school.

- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used to provide a wide range of sporting opportunities for pupils, such as football, basketball, boccia and tag rugby. Leaders ensure that funding is used well to increase some pupils' participation levels in sport through targeted after-school clubs. The funding also provides a wealth of professional learning for teachers. They observe and teach alongside specialist sports coaches each week to improve the quality of teaching in PE.
- Leaders, supported by staff, ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and offers many engaging and exciting opportunities for pupils to learn about subjects other than English and mathematics. The standard of work in most of these subjects is of a high quality and pupils retain and remember the knowledge they have been taught. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop spiritually, morally and socially throughout the curriculum. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and religions in their religious education (RE) work. Some pupils do not have a deep understanding of the different people, faiths and traditions of our world.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to provide effective support for lower-attaining disadvantaged pupils and disadvantaged pupils with SEND. Leaders use the funding to provide tailored support to improve basic English and mathematics skills and to support disadvantaged pupils with behavioural difficulties so that they can access learning alongside their peers. However, the funding is not used as well to improve the outcomes of the most able disadvantaged pupils, particularly in writing. Some of these pupils are not making the progress leaders expect from their starting points.

Governance of the school

- Trustees are a highly effective team, despite many being new to role. They receive detailed reports from leaders about the effectiveness of actions taken to improve the school's performance, including the spending of additional funding. Many trustees make visits to the school to meet with leaders, speak with pupils and examine the impact of leaders' actions on improving the quality of education pupils receive. Because of this, they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Trustees hold leaders to account effectively. Minutes of the meetings of the board of trustees show that many trustees ask challenging questions during meetings. They are tenacious in ensuring that leaders quickly take actions to improve following this challenge.
- Trustees are reflective and ensure that the board of trustees is constantly looking to develop its effectiveness. For example, trustees have recently completed an audit of skills to identify gaps in knowledge and expertise. They have quickly recruited new trustees with skills in identified weaker areas to fill those gaps.
- Trustees ensure that they fulfil statutory duties, including safeguarding. They complete thorough safeguarding audits and complete rigorous checks of the school's recruitment

and vetting procedures. All trustees have received training in safeguarding so that they can effectively check that leaders keep pupils safe in school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. Staff are well trained and their knowledge is regularly updated. Staff are vigilant and aware of the signs of abuse and how to access help for pupils.
- Leaders know pupils and their families well. They build effective and respectful relationships with vulnerable families and are tenacious in seeking, and providing, support for them at the earliest possible stages.
- Leaders contribute effectively to plans for pupils who are at risk of harm or who are on the child protection register. They liaise with and share information with external agencies, including local authority social care and early help professionals.
- Most pupils say they feel safe in school and are well cared for by staff. Leaders provide a range of 'in-house' support for vulnerable pupils, including one-to-one counselling, behaviour support and access to free before- and after-school care.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe and can effectively identify and manage a wide range of potential dangers and risks, including when online. Most parents agree the school is a safe place for their children. As one parent said, 'The teachers really care about my child's well-being.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving but it is not yet consistently good in all year groups. When teaching is weaker, particularly in English, work is not well matched to pupils' interests or abilities. Consequently, some pupils are not suitably challenged and they do not engage effectively in learning.
- Some teachers, particularly in key stage 1, do not spot errors in pupils' knowledge and understanding quickly enough. When this happens, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of, especially in reading and writing.
- The teaching of reading in key stage 1 is not effective for some pupils. Teachers do not always ensure that the texts pupils read are carefully matched to their abilities. Some teachers do not teach pupils effective comprehension strategies. Because of this, some pupils do not understand the words they read and are unable to answer questions about what they have read.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong. Teachers ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding through problem-solving and reasoning activities. For example, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 use the 'SPED' strategy to tackle problems. Pupils generate accurate answers and reasons for them by 'solving it, proving it, explaining it and drawing it'.

- When teaching is stronger, teachers use secure subject knowledge to ask probing and thoughtful questions which develop pupils' thinking further. For example, in a key stage 2 English lesson, the teacher asked, 'Why do you think the character is mischievous and can you find evidence from the text to support this?' Pupils responded positively and were able to locate direct quotes from the book they were reading to justify their opinions.
- The teaching of reading in key stage 2 is highly effective. Teachers model and explain ambitious vocabulary effectively. As a result, pupils can infer meaning from what they read. For example, in one English lesson, pupils were able to say that the character of a pig would be difficult to pick up and carry, as the text had described him as being 'a vast, pink bulk'.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers systematically model and articulate the sounds that can be heard in different words. They accurately demonstrate how to represent these sounds as letters. Pupils can effectively segment and blend together the sounds they have been taught to read unknown words accurately.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have positive relationships with pupils. They know pupils well and work hard to build their independence and resilience.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They sensitively support pupils with SEND. They provide effective small-group interventions and one-to-one support for pupils with complex SEND. As a result, these pupils can access the curriculum alongside their peers.
- Most parents agree that pupils are taught well. Typical parental comments include 'My daughter has amazing teachers and she is blossoming' and 'This is a fantastic school. My child learns new things every day.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Some pupils do not have positive attitudes towards learning. These pupils do not always enjoy school and find it difficult to engage in learning, particularly in the absence of adult support.
- Most pupils are tolerant and respectful to other pupils and adults. They have some understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy. Most pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are proud to be part of the school and say they feel a sense of 'belonging' when they wear the school uniform. Pupils are proud of their work and enjoy celebrating successes with their friends. For example, one pupil applauded another pupil's success in writing during a lesson and shouted, 'That's awesome!'
- Most pupils enjoy being challenged and are resilient. They try their best and, as one pupil said, 'I never give up.'

- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. They help adults tidy the hall after lunch and act as 'special helpers' for the younger children at lunchtimes. Pupils look after the school environment by spending their lunchtimes litter-picking.
- Pupils understand the different forms of bullying. Some pupils say they have been bullied in school. They say that teachers and leaders deal with this effectively in most instances. Pupils agree that bullying is rare and that it is 'much better than last year'.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe, including when online. They have a sound grasp of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They enjoy running the 'daily mile' each day and learning how to cook healthy meals with students from the local university who run a weekly cooking club.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour are not consistently good throughout the school day. Some pupils do not listen attentively to staff or each other. Some pupils' behaviour is disruptive and has a negative impact on the learning of others.
- Leaders have put plans and systems in place to improve pupils' attendance and to reduce the number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. These are having an impact for some pupils, but are not fully effective in ensuring that the school's attendance figure is at least in line with that seen nationally.
- Leaders are quickly improving pupils' behaviour. The school's behaviour policy has been redesigned and staff are applying sanctions and rewards more consistently. Pupils are positive about the changes and enjoy earning rewards such as 'class dojos' and invitations to have pizza with the headteacher.
- Leaders have acted quickly to provide bespoke support and personalised curriculums for those pupils at risk of exclusion. They have worked closely with alternative providers to train staff and adapt provision for these pupils. There is a strong sense of inclusion threaded throughout the school's pastoral leadership.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- While pupils' attainment is improving in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2, the progress pupils make in these subjects is not consistently strong across the school.
- Over the last two years, some pupils have not made sufficient progress in reading from their starting points by the end of key stage 2. Some current pupils in key stage 1 are not making the progress the school expects in reading, particularly in the understanding of what they read.
- Current pupils' workbooks show that the progress some pupils make in writing is variable across different year groups. In some year groups, pupils make strong progress from their starting points, while in others they do not consistently make the progress the school expects. Some disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress

they should from their starting points. Because of this, they do not attain as highly as other pupils in writing.

- Current pupils' workbooks show that they are making strong progress in most other subjects across the wider curriculum. The work they produce is of a high quality and is very well presented. Pupils retain and remember most of what they have been taught and have a deep knowledge and understanding of science, history and geography. However, some pupils do not have a secure understanding of what they have been taught in RE. They do not retain or remember learning about other faiths and religions because they do not study them in enough depth.
- Pupils make consistently strong progress in mathematics in all year groups. Attainment is rising across the school. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of the mathematics curriculum and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over the last year. Because of this, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics is at least in line with the national averages in key stages 1 and 2.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading and writing continue to increase in key stages 1 and 2. They are now typically in line with the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check is consistently high. The effective teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 ensures that pupils use phonics knowledge to accurately and fluently read many decodable words.
- Because of leaders' effective actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, more pupils leave key stage 2 attaining the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics than previously. As a result, more pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders have maintained the excellent quality of teaching and learning seen at the last inspection and continued to improve outcomes over time. Leaders have a clear and precise understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years and have effective plans in place for further improvement.
- Leaders have built a cohesive, determined and passionate team. Staff know children very well and have a comprehensive knowledge of the early years curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning. The early years leader provides a range of professional development and coaching to further increase the team's effectiveness.
- Children enter the early years with skills typically below those expected, particularly in reading and writing. Staff quickly and accurately assess the needs of individual children. They use this information to plan an exciting and inspirational indoor and outdoor curriculum that is shaped around children's interests and abilities. Because of this, children make a flying start to their time in school and make exceptional progress in all areas of learning.

- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff ensure that activities are precisely matched to children's fascinations and that they are meaningful. For example, children were learning about the life cycle of a chicken. They observed eggs being incubated while reading stories to the soon-to-be-hatched chicks, completed subtraction calculations using pretend eggs and wrote diaries to record what had happened to the eggs and chicks each day in preparation for their return to the local farm. A typical parental comment was 'The Reception classes do amazing activities that help children learn in a fun way.'
- Staff ensure that learning is secure and well connected. For example, children were studying the story of 'Rosie's Walk'. Staff skilfully linked the story to work on telling the time. Children were able to retell parts of the story and record the times of day Rosie visited different places in the book.
- Staff use questioning effectively. Staff frequently ask questions to secure children's understanding of what has previously been taught. For example, children making models using different shapes were asked, 'Can you count how many spheres you have used?' Staff were able to successfully check children's counting skills and their recognition of three-dimensional shapes.
- Staff have excellent relationships with children. They ensure that routines are well established and that children are exceptionally well cared for. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and paediatric first aid. Consequently, children feel safe in the environment, they feel valued and their behaviour is impeccable.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding is used well to provide support for disadvantaged children and children with complex SEND. These pupils receive one-to-one support, multisensory play and programmes to develop their speech and language. Because of effective support, these pupils can access the curriculum alongside their peers more successfully.
- Staff have developed excellent relationships with external services and the local community. For example, staff work effectively with the school nurse to provide support to families with toilet training. Representatives of local businesses visit the school to provide children with first-hand experiences, such as a visit from the local beekeeper to talk to children about how honey is made.
- Leaders and staff have developed strong partnerships with parents. They use a range of strategies to ensure that parents are part of their child's learning, such as 'Teddington' the home-school bear, 'home link' books and 'a message from home' notes. Parents are highly supportive of the early years team and appreciate the efforts of staff in providing an outstanding education for their children.
- Because of outstanding teaching, children make very strong progress in the early years. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is now above the national average. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of education.

School details

Unique reference number	140476
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10087382

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Donna Sherratt
Headteacher	Jon Bishop
Telephone number	01509 231 646
Website	www.robertbakewell.leics.sch.uk
Email address	office@robertbakewell.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 November 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher of the school took up post in September 2017. Many leaders are new to role following a restructuring of the senior leadership team in 2018.
- The school is governed by the board of trustees and is a single-academy trust.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Inspectors listened to pupils read in key stages 1 and 2. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and experiences in school. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the leaders for English and mathematics. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND, the leader of the early years, middle leaders and members of the board of trustees. They also held telephone conversations with the headteacher of an alternative provider used by the school and with the school improvement partner.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, pupils' performance and attendance, and records of the school's monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education. Inspectors also examined the school's plans for improvement, plans for the use and impact of the additional funding, minutes from meetings of the board of trustees and information available on the school's website.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of each day. There were also 65 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the staff survey. There were four responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Steve Varnam, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Stylianides	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Moore	Ofsted Inspector

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