

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Stonebow Primary School Loughborough

Stonebow Close, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 4ZH

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Stonebow Primary School Loughborough has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Paul Brockless. This school is a single-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the accounting officer, Paul Brockless, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by, Graham Bing.

What is it like to attend this school?

Stonebow Primary School is a welcoming school with a strong community feel. The school recognises and celebrates its diversity. As a result, pupils are proud of their differences and treat each other with respect and courtesy. One pupil told the inspector, 'We learn from each other's different religions and experiences. We learn to respect someone else's beliefs even if they are different to our own.'

The school has high expectations of all its pupils. The 'Stonebow powers' set out these expectations clearly for everyone: concentration, enthusiasm, curiosity, respect, perseverance and cooperation. Pupils and staff refer to the 'powers' when talking about both learning and behaviour. The vast majority of pupils display highly positive attitudes to their learning and achieve well.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything. Pupils understand what bullying is. They are confident that on the rare occasion that it happens, it will be dealt with 'quickly' and taken 'seriously'. Pupils have opportunities to attend a range of clubs and to contribute to the life of the school. They are proud of their roles, such as being a house captain.

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

The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has created 'learning pathways' which map out the precise big questions that pupils explore in each subject. 'Pathways' include several 'stepping stones' which connect what pupils learn now to what they learned before. 'Stepping stones' support teachers to plan purposeful learning opportunities.

Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and nurturing. In the Reception Year, children develop their independence so that they are ready for key stage 1. They are encouraged to follow their own interests and learn through play. Adults model conversation well and introduce new vocabulary. This helps children to develop their early language and communication skills.

Early reading is prioritised. Children start their reading journey as soon as they start school. In the Reception Year, children enjoy exploring texts in practical ways, including role-play. Staff across the school are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. Extra support is in place for pupils who struggle to keep up. Reading books that pupils take home are well matched to their level. This helps pupils to practise the sounds they have learned and develop their reading fluency.

The school works proactively with a range of external professionals to seek support and guidance for its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in lessons, some activities are not adapted well enough to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND.

During lessons, teachers skilfully question pupils to extend their thinking and to introduce new vocabulary. Teachers refer to the school's 'learning pathways'. This helps pupils to focus on the important knowledge and words in their current learning 'stepping stone'. For example, in a music lesson, pupils were asked to evaluate the challenges they faced when singing in two parts, and in a science lesson pupils were asked to explain the difference between a consumer and predator.

In reading and mathematics there are systems for checking what precise knowledge pupils remember over time. This assessment information is used well by teachers to adapt their input so that pupils can build on their prior learning. These systems are less well developed in some other subjects. The checks that teachers make on the precise knowledge that pupils remember over time do not always inform future learning. Although there are detailed plans in place to introduce a new approach to assessment, this approach is not yet in place.

The provision for pupils' wider development is well considered. Pupils learn about the importance of equality. They know that some people have different needs to their own. Pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of different types of families and relationships. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

The vast majority of pupils show a desire to do their best. They display positive attitudes towards their studies and focus well in lessons. Some pupils benefit from additional support which teaches them how to manage their own emotions. The school works hard to improve pupils' attendance. However, some pupils are still regularly absent from school and this is not improving rapidly enough. This limits their opportunities to learn.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They consider staff workload and well-being in all decision making. As a result, staff generally feel well supported. Those with responsibility for governance have an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and priorities. They offer the school the appropriate balance of support and challenge.

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, assessment approaches are at an early stage of being implemented. Teachers do not have a comprehensive picture of what pupils know and remember over time. The school should ensure that assessment approaches are in place across all subjects so that teachers can adapt their teaching to ensure that future planning is informed by what pupils know and remember.
- Some activities are not adapted well enough to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not always build their knowledge as securely as they could. The school should ensure that all staff know how to provide the support that each pupil with SEND needs, to help them achieve the best possible outcomes.
- A small number of pupils are persistently absent. These pupils miss out on important learning and wider experiences. The school should continue to work closely with families to ensure that pupils who are regularly absent from school receive the support they need to improve their attendance.

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 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 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

Unique reference number	139287
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10347557
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	203
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graham Bing
Headteacher	Paul Brockless
Website	www.stonebow.leics.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes to governance since the previous inspection, including a new chair.
- The school currently uses one registered 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 headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of subject leaders and a group of staff.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with representatives from the trust board and local governing body.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.
- 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.

Inspection team

Luella Dhoore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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