

Botley School

Elms Road, Botley, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 9JZ

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Procedures for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders do not always pass on concerns to external agencies when necessary.
- Safeguarding records are not organised or complete. Leaders have neither a clear overview of the risks pupils can face, nor their individual needs.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. This has an impact on the quality of their learning.
- The quality of teaching in early years is variable. Children do not make the progress of which they are capable. Too few children achieve a good level of development.
- Learning activities in early years are not sufficiently engaging for children. They sometimes lack purpose and seldom match children's needs.
- While achievement in key stages 1 and 2 is good overall, pupils do not attain highly enough in writing.
- While the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes, are good, teaching, including in mathematics, does not always challenge the most able pupils well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils work hard in class. They are courteous and respectful to each other.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Most pupils now make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Pupils attain highly in this subject.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. They make good progress.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum is stimulating. Middle leaders have made a positive contribution to raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching.
- Governors are committed to improving the school. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Two-year-old children are provided for well and make good progress as a result.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective, by:
 - acting immediately and appropriately in response to any safeguarding concerns
 - recording all safeguarding concerns about pupils and subsequent actions in a secure and well-maintained system.
- Improve the early years provision so that more children achieve a good level of development, by:
 - developing the quality of teaching so that children make the progress of which they are capable
 - ensuring that learning activities are purposeful and are closely matched to children's needs and next steps.
- Enhance pupils' attainment in writing so that it matches the high standards pupils achieve in reading and mathematics.
- Raise expectations and provide a suitable level of challenge for the most able pupils, including in mathematics, but also across the wider curriculum.
- Reduce persistent absence so that more pupils attend school regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have failed to ensure that all safeguarding policies, practices and procedures are consistently followed and effective. They were not able to demonstrate to inspectors that, where necessary, they refer their safeguarding concerns to the appropriate external agencies. As a result, the school has not ensured the safety of pupils who may be at risk from harm.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, have worked tirelessly to improve teaching and learning at the school. Following concerns raised at the previous inspection, leaders have established effective systems for checking on the progress of pupils. As a result, teaching is now good and outcomes have risen.
- Leaders' drive to improve teachers' performance has empowered staff who are all dedicated to raising outcomes for pupils. Staff appreciate the professional development they have received. As a result, staff morale is high and there is a strong culture of ongoing improvement in the school.
- Middle leaders are ambitious and increasingly well trained. They have received useful professional development and many have benefited from undertaking national qualifications. Middle leaders' knowledge about the individual subjects that they lead is impressive. They evaluate learning effectively to ensure that pupils make strong progress, and they quickly make any changes that are necessary. Middle leadership is enhancing the school's capacity to improve. Nevertheless, expectations for most-able pupils are not yet high enough in each subject of the curriculum. As a result, the progress that most-able pupils make is not consistently strong.
- Leaders have created an exciting curriculum for the pupils at Botley School, which has motivated and inspired pupils to want to learn. For example, pupils studying the history of costume recently put on an impressive fashion show for parents and carers, sparking pupils' interest in fashion now and in the past. The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing pupils with many opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge across and within subjects. The curriculum is appropriately enriched through trips, visits and workshops, as well as a wide range of after-school clubs.
- Physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well. As a result of leaders' commitment to increasing fitness levels and competitive sport for pupils, the school has recently been awarded a School Games Award at gold level. There is a wide range of sports and after-school clubs for pupils to join. Attendance at these activities has improved sharply.
- The local authority offers useful support to the school. For example, officers responded immediately to inspectors' concerns regarding leaders' safeguarding practice. Local authority support has been instrumental in helping to improve the teaching of writing and developing the role of middle leaders. Consequently, the teaching of writing is now effective.
- Additional funding is used positively to improve the learning both of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. From their different starting points, both groups are now making strong progress.

- Links with parents are positive. Parents appreciate that the school gives all pupils an equal opportunity to succeed. As one parent commented, 'Each child is treated individually and made to feel valued, accepted and encouraged, no matter what their background or ability.' The vast majority of parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, indicated that they would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not ensured that procedures for safeguarding pupils are fit for purpose. Despite commissioning an external audit of safeguarding, they have accepted too easily leaders' assertions as to the efficacy of current systems. Nevertheless, governors have successfully completed some checks on the effectiveness of safeguarding, including regularly reviewing the suitability of adults to work and volunteer in the school. They also check with pupils that they feel safe in the school.
- Governors are ambitious for every pupil in the school and are determined to make the school as good as it can be. The professional skills that they bring to the governing body are utilised well. This results in sharp questioning of leaders' actions and effective support. As a result, both the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes have improved.
- Governors monitor closely the developments towards the objectives set out in the school improvement plan. They regularly visit the school to see the impact of actions on pupils' learning. This means that governors have a clear and strategic overview of the school's strengths and those areas in need of improvement.
- Governors ensure that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent well. They ask searching questions of leaders to ensure that the funding is having the desired impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils make good progress at Botley School.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders are not fulfilling their statutory duties in relation to protecting pupils from potential harm.
- Leaders have not ensured that records of safeguarding concerns are kept in a systematic way. Safeguarding records are disorganised. As a result, leaders do not have a clear oversight of the support that is being provided to meet vulnerable pupils' needs.
- Leaders do not rigorously follow statutory guidance in passing safeguarding concerns on to the appropriate external agencies. In some cases where referrals should have been made, they were not, potentially placing pupils at risk. Leaders' actions are not always recorded and therefore leaders are not always sure whether the actions have been carried out or not. As a result, planned necessary actions are not always carried out.
- Some aspects of safeguarding are effective. Staff know the children in their care well. They are vigilant of any changes in the behaviour of pupils and swiftly report any concerns to leaders. Pre-employment checks are carried out stringently. Safeguarding training is regular and well planned. Staff, therefore, know what to do if they are worried about a child.

- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult whom they can speak to if they have any concerns. They say they know that they are listened to. Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, including ensuring that they keep their personal information protected.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school. In the few areas where teaching is less strong, it is rapidly improving.
- The teaching of reading is a strength and there is a well-established culture of reading for pleasure at Botley School. Pupils read well because they are taught the basics effectively. They build on knowledge and skills from their early reading experiences, relishing the opportunity to read challenging and interesting texts. Teachers make sure that pupils think deeply about their reading and use appropriate vocabulary.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Staff, including teaching assistants, possess strong subject knowledge of phonics and use this to help pupils to blend sounds well when reading unknown words. Pupils are beginning to apply their phonic knowledge to their writing with increasing accuracy.
- Recently introduced whole-school strategies to improve the teaching and assessment of mathematics are effective, especially in key stage 2. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, it was clear that pupils were working well together using their strong problem-solving skills to unravel algebraic equations. However, work in mathematics and in subjects such as history and geography is sometimes too easy for the most able pupils.
- Because of effective questioning, teachers identify swiftly any pupil who is slipping behind in their learning. Teachers quickly rectify pupils' misconceptions.
- The teaching of writing has improved recently. Although too few pupils reach national expectations in writing, this is due to prior, rather than current, underachievement. Pupils are highly productive and work hard to edit and improve their work. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good grasp of grammar, spelling and punctuation and that pupils apply this knowledge consistently when they write. As a result, most pupils write well for a range of purposes, including in the wider curriculum. Because of effective teaching, pupils' books, including those of disadvantaged pupils, show that they make strong progress over time in their writing skills with increasing confidence.
- The teaching of science is also a strength in the school. Pupils have many opportunities to work scientifically, including when measuring and recording results. As a result, pupils make strong progress in developing their scientific knowledge and skills.
- Support staff are skilled and knowledgeable. They carefully consider the best ways to adapt learning to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND make good progress and are confident in their approach to learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because leaders do not consistently implement necessary procedures for reporting concerns about pupils' welfare to external agencies. As a result, leaders and governors cannot guarantee that pupils are safe.
- Other aspects of pupils' personal development are better. Pupils care greatly about their learning. Classrooms are typically calm and purposeful environments where pupils can concentrate and complete their tasks.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. With over 50 languages spoken by the children of Botley School, leaders look for every opportunity to promote diversity, respect and tolerance. Pupils told an inspector about the recent international tasting party, in which they tasted and enjoyed food from heritages within their community. As a result of this approach, pupils learn to appreciate different cultures and religions. Pupils ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally at their school. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils say that occasionally there are cases of bullying, but assured inspectors that staff stop it when it does happen. Key stage 2 pupils recently enjoyed an educational performance by a theatre group, which enhanced their understanding of the different approaches that they might use in response to bullying behaviour. As a result, they have a good knowledge of what bullying is.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves emotionally and physically healthy. Playtimes are active and harmonious. Leaders responsible for PE ensure that all pupils are involved in sport and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' personal fitness is improving due to a range of challenges, including the popular 'star-jump challenge'. The recently introduced house-team songs are proving successful in engendering a healthy competitive spirit in pupils.
- Many pupils, including an increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils, engage in extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as tag rugby and netball.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and welcoming. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed a concert performed by students from a local school, listening attentively to the music and asking appropriate questions.
- Pupils are keen to work hard in lessons. Typically, classrooms 'buzz' with pupils eager to learn and try their best. Pupils have a sense of pride in their work.
- Playground behaviour is also positive. Pupils are very active at breaktimes, playing well together. They told inspectors that any instances of pupils falling out are quickly resolved by staff.
- Leaders have taken a focused and methodical approach to the monitoring and tracking

of behaviour incidents. As a result, they can identify and tackle emerging issues before they become more significant. There have been no exclusions this academic year because the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour are well understood and addressed.

- Most pupils attend school regularly and attendance is above the national average. Nevertheless, a small proportion of families choose to take unauthorised holidays during term time. Despite leaders' actions, levels of persistent absence are currently too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, pupils' outcomes have improved. This is because the quality of teaching has improved rapidly. Strong progress is evident in pupils' books.
- Pupils attain well in reading and mathematics. In the 2018 key stage 2 tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in reading was above the national average. Pupils' progress in reading by the end of key stage 2 has been in the top 20% of schools for the past two years. Attainment at the expected standard in mathematics was also high in 2018 compared with the national average, with pupils making better than average progress.
- Pupils who read to an inspector showed appropriate fluency and comprehension for their age. Pupils are articulate about their favourite authors and books. They are encouraged to read a wide range of sophisticated texts. As a result, pupils have developed good reading habits, reading regularly and enjoying what they read.
- Owing to previous underachievement, pupils' attainment in writing is not as high as it is in reading and mathematics. The progress of current pupils in writing shows that strategies to improve outcomes in this subject are effective. Examples of pupils' writing seen by inspectors confirm that pupils are making good progress. Pupils use a variety of sentence structures and increasingly complex vocabulary in their writing. They write with sustained accuracy and enjoyment.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate because the systems to moderate work among staff and leaders are effective. Teachers regularly meet with leaders to confirm assessments and review the progress of individual pupils.
- The school's assessment information, supported by work seen in pupils' books, shows that most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what the most able pupils can attain. Sometimes, the most able pupils either choose or are set work that is too easy. As a result, the progress of the most able pupils is not consistently strong throughout the school, including sometimes in mathematics. However, in reading, teachers' expectations are always high. As a result, the most able pupils read and respond to increasingly challenging texts.
- Strong teaching means that pupils currently in key stage 1 are making good progress from their starting points. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has increased over the last two years and is now in line with national averages. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected

standard in reading was average in the 2018 national assessments, it was below average in writing and mathematics. This was due to weaker teaching in the past.

- Across all year groups and in all subjects, including English and mathematics, most disadvantaged pupils are currently making stronger progress than previously. Their progress is now more in line with that of their classmates.
- Pupils with SEND are also making good progress in a wide range of subjects. This is because staff, including highly skilled teaching assistants, provide effective support for individuals' needs.
- Most pupils also learn well across the wider curriculum, applying their knowledge to different situations. For example, pupils from Year 6 recently visited the Natural History Museum in Oxford. This resulted in high-quality science work linked to dinosaurs, fossils and evolution. Work in pupils' books confirmed to inspectors that outcomes for middle-ability and least-able pupils are of a high standard across the curriculum. However, at times, a lack of challenge hampers the progress of the most able pupils.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The early years provision is inadequate. Systems for safeguarding children are not effective, sharing the same weaknesses as those used for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. In addition, children's progress from their starting points is too slow in Nursery and Reception Year.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has been well below the national average for the past two years. This is because children make weak progress from starting points that are below those typical for their age in Nursery and Reception Year.
- While some staff form positive relationships with children, this is too variable. In some instances, adults are overly focused on tidying and organising the learning environment, as opposed to developing children's learning. At times, adults are not vigilant enough and children do not always get the help they need.
- Leaders, including the early years leader, are aware of the strengths and the areas of weakness currently in the provision. There is a suitable action plan in place to address swiftly those aspects that need to be better.
- Some aspects of teaching in early years are not good enough. Expectations of what young children can achieve are not always high enough. Teachers do not always make effective use of their assessments to plan suitably challenging and well-considered activities that introduce children to what they need to learn next. However, adults' support for the development of children's speech and language skills is generally better than other aspects of the provision. Adults model language effectively, helping children to rehearse vocabulary and to experiment with words.
- Children behave well in early years. They play and learn harmoniously. Children listen to adults carefully and understand the well-established routines. Inspectors observed children clearly interacting contentedly with their friends in the early years setting. As a result, children are well prepared to form strong relationships in the future.
- The good-quality provision for two-year-olds identified at the previous inspection has

been maintained. Teaching supports play and relationships well. Children sustain their play and are interested in the learning activities on offer. As a result, children make strong progress in all aspects of their development while in the provision for two-year-olds. Unfortunately, this strong progress is not maintained across the whole of early years.

- Skilled support from well-trained teaching assistants ensures that the needs of children with SEND are understood and met. For example, inspectors observed a member of staff communicating using signs alongside the spoken word to ensure that a child was fully included in exploring an activity. Consequently, children with SEND make strong progress in early years.

School details

Unique reference number	123067
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10058132

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Potter
Headteacher	Alison Marsh
Telephone number	01865 248573
Website	www.botleyschool.org.uk
Email address	office.2569@botley.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 November 2016

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years consists of a part-time provision for two-year-olds, a Nursery and two full-time Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above the national average.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club.
- Since the last inspection, a new chair and a new vice-chair of the governing body have been appointed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in lessons. Most lessons were observed jointly with a senior leader. Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, two assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, and leaders with responsibility for early years, reading, writing, mathematics, science and PE.
- The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also met with three representatives from the local authority and the designated officer for safeguarding from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and considered their views of the school. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils during lessons and during lunchtimes and breaktimes. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the 66 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and also considered 44 free-text responses. They spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: leaders' self-evaluation of the school's performance; the school improvement plan; minutes of governing body meetings; information about pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance; and several key school policies. Inspectors considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding and the recruitment of staff.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Wibroe	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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