

Inspection of Babington Academy

Strasbourg Drive, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 0SZ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Babington Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school provides an inclusive and supportive environment for its pupils. It is a welcoming community. Leaders have developed a curriculum that is aspirational and meets the needs of its pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They live up to the school's 'PROUD' values. These include being resilient and daring to dream.

Pupils learn about diversity. They say that they are accepted for who they are. Pupils learn to value others' views. This helps them to grow into respectful citizens. It is central to the provision for personal development. Pupils are active in helping to further improve the school. They benefit from a rich offer of wider opportunities beyond the academic curriculum.

The pastoral care is strong. Pupils say they feel safe. They are confident that on the rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is dealt with effectively. Most pupils behave well in lessons. This means that the majority of pupils can focus successfully on their learning.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have prioritised high expectations and equal opportunities for all.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. It is broad and balanced. Leaders recognise the need for more pupils to study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects at key stage 4. Progress has been made towards this aim with more curriculum time given to pupils studying French and Spanish at key stage 3. Although some of the published examination results are low, current pupils are achieving well in their chosen courses. This is particularly true for pupils with SEND.

Leaders have planned and sequenced the subject curriculums well. Each curriculum includes the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders have thought carefully about the order in which pupils learn this important knowledge. This is helping to make sure that most pupils build on what they already know and can do.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They adapt the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND develop their knowledge and skills appropriately. In most subjects, teachers check that pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on to new content. However, in some subjects, teachers sometimes move pupils on to new learning before they are ready. They do not always check well enough that all pupils have the secure understanding they need to progress. Consequently, some pupils do not progress as well as they could.

Pupils who do not yet read with confidence and fluency receive effective support. Key stage 3 pupils benefit from a variety of reading interventions and activities.

These are designed to improve their basic literacy skills and to encourage and promote a love of reading.

Most pupils behave well. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. The school's procedures and policies for managing behaviour are established and understood. Pupils generally move calmly around the school and settle well into lessons. However, a small number of pupils struggle to behave well all of the time. When this occurs, other pupils can be distracted from their learning.

Leaders provide pupils with a rich set of experiences through the wider curriculum. Some of these experiences are designed to develop pupils' confidence and character. Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe as well as how to treat others with kindness and respect. Leaders provide frequent leadership opportunities, for example through becoming a 'safeguarding ambassador' or joining the school council. Careers guidance is well planned. Pupils receive plentiful information on the options open to them in the future. They learn to understand and value how they can make a positive difference to the lives of others in modern Britain.

Staff feel very well supported by leaders. They receive frequent opportunities to develop professionally. They feel their well-being is considered. Governors support the school effectively, for example through regular link visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils are taught how to stay safe. Staff are well trained. They understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. They take prompt action if they see signs of pupils at risk of harm. Leaders respond swiftly to any safeguarding concerns. This helps to keep pupils safe.

Leaders work closely with families and other agencies. The single central record shows that all the necessary checks are made when appointing staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers move pupils on to new learning too quickly. Pupils do not always have a deep enough understanding of the previously learned content before learning something new. Leaders should ensure that teachers make precise checks on what pupils have learned, address any gaps in their knowledge and move pupils on to new content only when pupils are ready.
- A small number of pupils do not consistently behave well. This poor behaviour can distract other pupils and disrupt learning. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to help these pupils regulate their poor behaviour and therefore prevent pupils' learning from being interrupted.

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](#)' 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.

School details

Unique reference number	143247
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10264123
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,347
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeffrey Knight
Principal	Sara-Jayne Fletcher
Website	www.babington.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in September 2016. When its predecessor school, Babington Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school joined the Learning without Limits Academy Trust in October 2016.
- The principal started the role in 2017.
- The school has an additionally resourced provision for up to 40 pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties and autism spectrum disorder.
- The school makes use of 16 alternative education providers, of which two are registered.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders, governors, including the chair of the local governing body, the chair of trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, design and technology and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed curriculum thinking with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with leaders, members of staff and pupils to evaluate the arrangements for safeguarding in school. They looked at records of actions taken by leaders to protect pupils at risk. Inspectors checked whether members of staff understood the safeguarding policy and procedures. They checked whether pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.
- Inspectors spoke formally and informally with pupils across the age range.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

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