

# Inspection of a good school: The Sir Donald Bailey Academy

Bailey Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 4EP

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Inspection dates:

20 and 21 June 2023

## Outcome

The Sir Donald Bailey Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Each morning leaders are on hand, at the gate, to welcome the pupils into school. They take this opportunity to check how pupils are feeling and alleviate any worries that pupils or their parents and carers might have. Pupils feel safe and happy.

Pupils enjoy attending this school. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve and grow to become. One pupil summed up the view of many when he said, 'We learn great things at this school.' Pupils engage well in their studies. They enjoy learning the school's ambitious curriculum.

Pupils describe the school as a kind place. Teachers develop pupils to be accepting and respectful. Pupils know that falling out sometimes happens, but they equally describe how teachers sort this out quickly.

The school is at the heart of its community. The weekly 'reading cafe' is an opportunity for parents and pupils to read together. This both supports pupils to develop a love for reading and helps leaders engage with families.

Many parents hold positive views of the school. Many reflected on how supportive they feel the school is. One commented that staff have 'moved mountains' to help their child achieve well.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have identified the concepts that pupils must learn about. The curriculum has local links to help bring it to life. For example, pupils learn about the English Civil Wars. Pupils then visit the National Civil War Museum in Newark to further embed what they have learned. The fire brigade also helps to explain how the Great Fire of London spread so quickly.

Leaders have designed the curriculum so pupils can draw on knowledge they have already learned. This helps them build on what they already know. In a few foundation subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils need to know is not yet well identified. Pupils do not always learn this well enough to understand larger concepts or produce high-quality pieces of work.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use appropriate resources to help pupils learn. Effective teaching helps many pupils know and remember more. In many subjects, teachers use assessment purposefully to check that pupils have learned important content. However, this is not yet the case in all subjects, and some pupils have unidentified gaps in their knowledge as a result.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils access the full curriculum. Leaders ensure that they accurately identify these pupils' needs and develop strategies to help them learn. Teachers support pupils with SEND to achieve as a result.

Children start to learn the sounds that letters make at the start of foundation stage 2. Teachers use an effective and consistent approach to teaching pupils how to read. Adults listen to pupils read regularly to ensure that pupils become better readers. Staff who teach reading are early reading experts. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds they know. The reading curriculum ensures that pupils become strong readers. Pupils continue to develop a love for reading as they get older.

Children get off to a flying start in the early years. The curriculum allows pupils to develop their understanding across all areas of learning. For example, children get a strong grasp of number as they learn about odd and even numbers through pinning pairs of socks on a washing line. Teachers plan activities which help pupils understand the world around them and express their creativity. Recently, pupils have been learning about what lives under the sea and making different types of fish with various materials. Children are well prepared for the next stage.

Pupils are polite and behave well. Teachers are quick to deal with any incidents of poor behaviour. All staff expect high standards of conduct. The school is calm and purposeful. Pupils can spend all their time learning.

Pupils have a firm grasp of British values and understand why these are important. Assemblies and other planned activities help pupils develop morally and socially. Pupils develop a competitive spirit through the many extra-curricular sporting activities they access. They enjoy competing against other schools. Pupils have a chance to develop new interests and talents. For example, many Year 6 pupils are looking forward to recreating a production of 'Matilda' for all pupils after being inspired by going to watch the show in London.

Staff recognise that workload is reducing. Leaders consider staff's workload and well-being when making changes.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise the signs that a pupil might need help. They have a firm understanding of national and local safeguarding issues. Staff know exactly how to report and record any concerns.

Leaders triage all concerns and make sure that they take appropriate and swift action to safeguard pupils. Leaders have detailed chronologies of concerns and actions taken. They are quick to involve external agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils.

Trustees ensure that the safeguarding culture at the school remains strong through their monitoring and evaluation.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few foundation subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils need to know is not yet well identified. Pupils do not always learn this well enough to understand larger concepts or produce high-quality pieces of work in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that this essential knowledge is identified so that teachers can help pupils remember it.
- In some subjects, assessment is not precise enough to ensure that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge which are not addressed. Leaders must ensure that teachers check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum consistently well in all subjects.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Bowbridge Primary School, to be good in September 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141760
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268981
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	564
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sue Trentini
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Joanne Knapp
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sirdonaldbailey.co.uk">www.sirdonaldbailey.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school is a part of The Forge Trust.
- The school has a nursery provision for children aged 2 to 4 years.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector scrutinised the work pupils had produced in a range of other subjects.

- The inspector met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, the early years foundation stage and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- The inspector met with the safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector met with the trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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