

Inspection of Lowe's Wong Infant School

Queen Street, Southwell, Nottinghamshire NG25 0AA

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Aly Speed. The school is part of Minster Trust for Education, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Matthew Parris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Turner.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lowe's Wong Infant School as an academy under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine 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 graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Lowe's Wong Infant School is at the heart of its local community. Pupils love the opportunities they have to represent their school. They are excited to sing at a local Christmas shopping event. They perform Maypole dances at community events. Pupils are chosen as 'Bramley King' and 'Bramley Queen' to celebrate the 'Bramley Apple Festival' held in the town.

It is a happy school. The care that staff give to pupils is second to none. Parents appreciate how well their children are known. One parent said: 'The staff always have the best interests of children at the heart of everything they do.'

Pupils agree that everyone is friendly in their school. At playtime and lunchtime, they get on well. They enjoy a wide range of well-organised games and activities. They look out for each other. Pupils know that if they are lonely, they can go to sit on the 'friendship bench' and that a playground buddy will help them to find someone to play with. The school has established three simple rules for behaviour in lessons, 'good looking, good listening, good sitting.' However, in some lessons some pupils do not stick to these rules.

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

The reading, mathematics and early years curriculum is well designed. It sets out in sufficient detail what pupils should learn, and when. In these subjects, pupils remember important knowledge. Children in the early years consider the question, 'What comes out at night?' They name badgers, foxes and owls as animals that wait for the dark to appear. They use 'nocturnal' with confidence to describe these animals. Year 2 pupils talk about their understanding of place value in mathematics. They show resilience as they work. One pupil said: 'What keeps me going is that I like mathematics. I am determined that I am going to finish all my work.'

In other subjects across the wider curriculum this is not the case. In these subjects the school has not clearly identified the precise knowledge that pupils will learn. It is not consistently clear how new learning builds on prior learning. As a result, pupils do not acquire secure, ever increasing knowledge. The checks that the school makes to assure itself that pupils are learning well in these subjects are not effective. They do not help the school to identify the areas where further work is needed, or where staff may require additional support and guidance.

The school has prioritised reading. Children in the early years start to learn the sounds they need to know to read and write without delay. Staff receive training to deliver the phonics programme effectively. They identify pupils who need more help to learn to read and make sure they receive additional support to keep up. Pupils are positive about reading. They chat about the books they enjoy including, 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit' and 'Fantastic Mr Fox'. Each school day ends with a story time. Pupils listen well as their teachers read to them in a way that holds their interest.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early. There are plans in place to outline the support they will receive. Sometimes the adjustments that the school makes are not successfully removing the barriers that prevent them from learning as well as they can. In addition, because some pupils with SEND have unmet needs, their behaviour can impact on the learning of other pupils.

Pupils have rich and varied experiences beyond the curriculum. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the clubs they can join. These include science, tennis and girls' football – 'Little Lionesses'. Pupils have opportunities to go on trips to a local farm, a wildlife park and to Belvoir Castle. Year 2 pupils anticipate their annual residential trip. 'Muddy Explorers' in the school garden is a weekly event for children in the early years. The school council represent pupil voice. Older pupils talk with intelligence about equality. They cite Rosa Parks and Malala Yousafzai as examples of unacceptable discrimination.

The trust and the local governing body have worked closely with the school to identify school improvement priorities. While there is still significant work to be done, leaders demonstrate the ambition and capacity to make the improvements needed with the support of the trust.

Staff agree that the school has a team spirit. They say that the doors of senior leaders 'are always open'. They enjoy working at the school and feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the foundation subjects the curriculum does not precisely identify the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. It is not clear how knowledge is built up layer by layer over time. The school must ensure that the small steps of learning that pupils need to make are clearly identified in every subject.
- Some curriculum leaders do not have a clear overview of the subject they lead. They do not have a well-developed understanding of the work that needs to be done to improve their subject or where colleagues may require further support and guidance. The school must ensure that all subject leaders adequately monitor their subjects and effectively use this information to drive school improvement in the area which they lead.
- The support that pupils with SEND receive does not consistently enable them to access the curriculum. Their needs are not always met and they do not learn as well as they could. The school must provide staff with the knowledge and skills they need to adapt the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn the intended curriculum as well as they can.

- Behaviour is not consistently good across the school. Some lessons are disrupted by the poor behaviour of a few pupils. This is not always well managed and can hinder the learning of some pupils. The school must ensure that all pupils keep to the school rules and give of their very best in lessons.

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	145642
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10242448
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Turner
CEO of trust	Matthew Parris
Headteacher	Aly Speed
Website	www.lwi.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Minster Trust for Education in April 2021. When its predecessor school, also known as Lowe's Wong Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted in April 2009, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and one other governor. A further meeting was held with four representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading; mathematics; design and technology; and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector listened to pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, in assembly, around the school and at social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and pupils. They considered the responses to the staff survey and comments made by parents on Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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