

Inspection of Ibstock School

Central Avenue, Ibstock, Leicestershire LE67 6NE

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Nicola Koncarevic. The school is part of LIFE Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chris Parkinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anil Majithia.

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils are positive about the school. Their experiences in school have improved recently and they enjoy learning in a safe and supportive environment.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects as part of a well-planned curriculum. However, this is not always taught effectively. Sometimes pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with a staff team that cares about them. Staff inspire them for the future. Pupils often enjoy learning and gain more knowledge over time. However, in some cases, pupils do not value their education well enough or take sufficient pride in their work.

Pupils' behaviour is improving; however, it is inconsistent. Many pupils appreciate how they are expected to conduct themselves and behave well. At times, however, some pupils do not engage fully with the school's high expectations. When this happens, they behave less well and disrupt the learning of others.

Pupils have wide-ranging opportunities to engage with extra-curricular activities. These include trips, such as to Belgium and Berlin. Pupils learn teamwork and leadership skills, for example through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and various sporting activities.

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

The school is working in partnership with the trust to raise aspirations of what pupils can achieve. A strong emphasis on key priorities is contributing to the school's ongoing improvement. However, a lot of this work is recent. There has not been sufficient time for some of the changes that have been made to have the intended impact on the quality of the provision.

The curriculum is well designed and carefully sequenced. It identifies clearly what pupils need to learn and when. At times, however, the delivery of the curriculum does not support pupils' learning well enough. Pupils sometimes disengage and do not achieve as well as they should.

The introduction of appropriate support is helping pupils who need it to improve their reading skills. While this support is relatively new, it is already beginning to make a positive difference.

Recent changes have ensured that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified accurately. However, information shared with staff is not used consistently well to ensure that these pupils' needs are met fully. Pupils with SEND sometimes struggle to access learning because adaptations are not matched closely enough to their needs.

Work to improve pupils' behaviour has begun to take effect, although the school recognises that there is more to be done. Pupils respond increasingly well to teacher-led

activities in lessons. However, some pupils struggle to work effectively without close adult supervision. Variation in staff's behaviour management means that incidents of disruption to learning are not dealt with consistently enough. This has a negative impact on some pupils' attitudes to learning.

The number of pupils suspended from school has fallen substantially over time. However, the school acknowledges that suspension rates are still too high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who have been suspended are not supported well enough to improve their conduct.

The school is working positively with pupils and their families to improve attendance, with some success. However, attendance rates are still not high enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils do not value school sufficiently or feel that they belong.

There is a strong commitment to supporting pupils' personal development. However, aspects of this programme are in the early stages of development. Some pupils cannot talk with confidence about fundamental British values, or other faiths and religions. Provision for careers education is positive. Pupils have access to a range of support and information relating to careers that prepares them for their next steps.

A broad range of extra-curricular activities helps pupils to experience the world beyond their local communities. Further opportunities exist to develop pupils' talents and interests through the variety of clubs that are available.

Leaders make appropriate decisions to improve the school and consider staff's workload when making necessary changes. Most staff feel well supported. Nevertheless, some staff say that their workload affects their well-being. Many parents and carers recognise the positive steps taken to improve the school in recent months. However, some are less confident in these changes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not implemented consistently well. At times, teachers do not teach or adapt curriculum content effectively enough to help pupils secure new knowledge. When this is the case, pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught and cannot apply it to new learning. The school should ensure that the well-planned curriculum is implemented effectively in every subject.
- The needs of pupils with SEND are not being met consistently well. Some pupils with SEND do not get the support necessary to be able to engage fully with their learning.

The school must ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and expertise to be able to support pupils with SEND so that these pupils can access learning that is well suited to their needs.

- Strategies to manage pupils' conduct are not always applied consistently or effectively. As a result, some pupils find it hard to behave well, either in lessons or around the school site. This affects how well these pupils learn, as well as disrupting the learning of others. The school must support staff to use the agreed approach to managing pupils' behaviour so that all pupils understand the school's high behaviour expectations.
- Some pupils do not attend school often enough, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Even when in school, a small minority of pupils choose not to attend lessons. All of these pupils miss out on important learning and wider experiences. The school should further develop effective strategies to improve attendance.
- Aspects of the programme that supports pupils' personal development are at an early stage of development. Pupils' understanding of important aspects, such as modern British values and different faiths and cultures, is variable. The school must ensure that all pupils benefit from an effective programme of personal development that prepares them well for adulthood.
- Recent changes to improve the school are not always communicated effectively enough to all stakeholders. Some staff and parents do not share the school's aims and aspirations for the pupils. Some of these stakeholders do not think that their views or opinions are considered when the school makes the changes that are needed. The school should continue to strengthen its work with all stakeholders to remove any obstacles that prevent the school from continuing to improve.

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	138721
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10379574
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	740
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Anil Majithia
CEO of the trust	Chris Parkinson
Headteacher	Nicola Koncarevic
Website	www.ibstockschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined LiFE Multi-Academy Trust in July 2021.
- The school underwent an age-range change from 11 to 14 years to 11 to 16 years in August 2022.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2024. There have been several other changes to the senior leadership team since that time.
- The school uses one registered and four unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the trust school improvement lead, senior leaders and other staff.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO, the chair of the board of trustees, and some trustees and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, history, design and technology, and modern foreign languages. 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subject areas, including personal, social, health and economic education, and English.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan and information about the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative from an alternative provision that the school uses.

Inspection team

Nyree Parker, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gulbanu Kader	Ofsted Inspector
Dick Vasey	Ofsted Inspector
Mohamed Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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