



The Mary Bassett Lower School

Further Information Pack



A name to be proud of

In 1948 Mary Anna Bassett died aged 95 and her obituary said of her: "Miss Bassett started the Leighton Buzzard handicraft Class for Cripples in 1890. (Riverside Building on Bridge Street) Her idea that cripples would find happiness in making beautiful things and could be taught to do so, in spite of their disabilities, is now a commonplace. Those who first started the idea must not be forgotten".

Ahead of her time, Mary Bassett was a forerunner in the principle of educational equality. Although our use of language to define those limited by physical impairment has evolved, it doesn't take a lot of imagination to consider that many of the individuals accessing the school in 1890 were subjected to marginalisation in society. Mary Bassett was keen to ensure all members of her local community had access to educational opportunities that encouraged effort, work and achievement as a precursor to 'happiness'.

Hanging in our school hall is a lasting tribute to this principle. It is a copper work plaque dedicated to her father following his death. This beautiful piece was made by the students in the Riverside School and features the words "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might".

At The Mary Bassett Lower School we are proud of the work we do to instil the values of equality and effort amongst our children – we feel this establishes confidence in them relating to others and the innate satisfaction of completing a job well done. Traditional values with a modern purpose!

The Mary Bassett Way

The 'Mary Bassett Way' is the school's well established ethos to ensure all members of the community behave respectfully and take responsibility for our actions. By following The Mary Bassett Way, children are encouraged to develop habits of conduct that make sure everyone is happy and safe. When the opportunity arises for children to learn from a poor choice, we take the time to talk this through with them using our **Restorative Approaches** strategy. The whole staff body has developed significant expertise to help children reflect on their choices and most importantly consider why they should not repeat the negative ones. Responding to poor behaviour with punishment and sanctions *only* often misses an opportunity to repair the wrong-doing, get to the root of the cause of the behaviour and ensure that the learning has happened to avoid the behaviour being repeated.





Our school area

The Mary Bassett Lower School is based in the centre of Leighton Buzzard. Being so close to the heart of the town, we draw our students from an area which contains the full diversity of our locality, most living within walking distance. At MBLS, we strive to embed the characteristics of good learning as much as focussing on academic achievement. As part of this drive, we have achieved Healthy Schools status, the School Games Platinum Mark, the Nurture Group Network Quality Mark and the Wellbeing Award for Schools.





Nursery (Pre-School) Provision

We have worked hard to maintain a popular onsite nursery provision, which had previously been rated Outstanding by OFSTED. This facility works closely with the school under the oversight of the Governing Body to provide the best possible start to those pupils enrolled, and offers school readiness provision to help the older children prepare for their next step.

Schools for the Future

This project is designed to help meet the needs of the 43,000 new homes that are expected in Central Bedfordshire by 2035. It is in the planning stages at the moment, but the governors at MBLS have had a key voice in the process, putting forward multiple proposals in the best interest of our town and our pupils. Any new headteacher would have their opportunity to develop the school and its ethos as this exciting project develops. Whilst detail cannot be shared publicly at this stage, the governing body is passionate about the direction of the school, and has met regularly to discuss it at length.



Attainment at The Mary Bassett School

We set stringent goals at school to strive to improve our students' outcomes as much as possible during their time with us. Our numbers of children achieving the expected standards in core subjects has risen year on year at the Year 4 exit point. To give you an indication of our journey to date targets for Summer 2020 are shown below.

Our focus on EYFS and KS1 has led to an improving picture, with targets for the end of KS1 more in line with the national benchmarks, and showing good added value since EYFS.

Reading to Expected Standard	77%
Writing to Expected Standard	65%
Maths to Expected Standard	72%

Our predicted outcomes at the end of Year 4 are rising, with the Summer 2020 targets in line or exceeding those of the year before. Achieving a positive attitude to learning is a focus at this stage to support the pupils' transition to middle school and long term success by the end of KS2. By the end of Year 6 our pupils tend to perform above national averages.

Reading to Expected Standard	78%
Writing to Expected Standard	68%
Maths to Expected Standard	71%