

Inspection of a good school: Longton Lane Community Primary School

Longton Lane, Rainhill, St Helens, Merseyside L35 8PB

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2024

Outcome

Longton Lane Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this vibrant and nurturing school. They know that staff expect them to work their hardest. They thrive on the school's well-established learning routines. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), rise to the challenge of the school's high expectations. They relish using sophisticated words when explaining their work. Most achieve well in most subjects, including mathematics and reading.

Children in the early years settle in quickly. They soon begin to share, take turns and help each other. They are increasingly curious about the school beyond the early years area. In the summer term, they are given the responsibility of participating with older pupils in the school council and the eco-council.

Pupils are courteous, caring and respectful. They give a warm welcome to new classmates, some of whom have recently arrived from other countries. Pupils take increasing responsibility for assessing the risks involved in their own play. They decide how to play safely outdoors in dens and on trees and swings.

Pupils enjoy taking part in the sporting activities that staff organise for them beyond the school day. They enjoy educational visits, including to places of worship such as mosques. They enthusiastically celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that flows logically from the beginning of the Reception Year to the end of Year 6. In all subjects, the school has designed learning which builds on that of the previous year. Teachers are clear about the important subject content that they want pupils to learn and when they need to learn it. The early years curriculum prepares children very well for learning in Year 1. Regular collaboration with a local secondary school contributes to pupils' social and academic readiness for Year 7.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. This helps them to explain and model new learning very clearly. They select suitable activities and resources that, in most subjects, help pupils to learn and remember the curriculum over time. However, in a small number of subjects, the strategies that teachers use to help pupils to remember do not work well enough. In these subjects, pupils struggle to recall what they have learned in the past and so cannot use it to help them when learning something new.

Teaching staff are quick to identify and to help pupils who have not understood. They regularly check what pupils have learned so that they can adapt future teaching to address gaps in knowledge and understanding.

Reading is a priority in this school. Teachers and teaching assistants have undertaken considerable training in teaching reading. They teach the phonics programme very effectively. Staff spot pupils who are beginning to fall behind and help them to catch up quickly. The vast majority of pupils become fluent, confident and accurate readers by the end of Year 1.

The school ensures that pupils across all year groups enjoy reading a wide range of texts for pleasure. In all classes, teachers read to pupils every day, often from books that the pupils have chosen themselves or brought from home.

The school identifies pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Staff use this information to give these pupils the help that they need to follow the school's curriculum with success and enjoyment alongside their peers.

Pupils' very positive behaviour in class enhances their learning. They listen carefully to explanations and improve their understanding by discussing with their classmates. Pupils, including children in the early years, become engrossed in tasks and work with sustained concentration.

The school promotes pupils' personal development. Older pupils take on responsibilities with pride, including being house captains and playground buddies. Pupils understand and respect difference, such as in race and culture. Taking into account age and maturity, the school makes sure that pupils understand matters such as consent and healthy relationships.

The school gives parents meaningful opportunities to be involved in their child's education. Staff invite parents into lessons and organise informative workshops. Via the school website, parents have a wealth of helpful and detailed guidance on helping their child learn, including mathematics and reading.

Governors have very strong professional expertise, which they use well to play a significant role in the school's improvement.

Staff appreciate that the school is very supportive of them at difficult times in their lives. They enjoy working at the school and are proud to do so. However, a significant number, including some subject leaders, feel that decision-making does not take enough account of staff's views or their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils struggle to remember past learning. Consequently, they cannot build on prior knowledge as well as they should when learning something new. The school should review its strategies for building long-term memory so that pupils remember more over time.
- A significant number of staff feel that the school does not take enough account of their views when making decisions that affect how they work. These staff consider that this sometimes has a negative impact on their workload and well-being. The school should engage meaningfully with staff when making decisions that affect how individuals carry out their responsibilities.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2019.

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	104777
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10321246
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carol Swaisland
Headteacher	Linda Speed
Website	www.longtonlane.st-helens.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken it into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector had discussions with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- The inspector held a meeting with governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector had a discussion with the school's local authority school improvement officer and the school's education welfare officer.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. As part of this process, she had discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, had discussions

with pupils, listened to pupils reading and looked at their work in books. The inspector also scrutinised the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspector had a discussion with the special educational needs coordinator to help evaluate provision and practice for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 of safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector had discussions with groups of pupils about their experiences of school. She also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. Responses to the pupil survey were too few to be taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Liz Kelly

Ofsted Inspector

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