

Long Meadow School

Garthwaite Crescent, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK5 7XX

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership and management, including by governors, ensure that teaching and pupils' achievement are good and improving.
- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school. Governors and members of staff share her determination to make the school even better.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported really well, and pupils' learning is enhanced with the addition of interesting visits, visitors and clubs.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for.
- Teaching is good because teachers provide work for pupils that is interesting and purposeful. They form good relationships with the pupils so that the school is calm and harmonious.
- Children do well in the Reception classes because members of staff provide them with the right level of support.
- All groups of pupils achieve well over time, and their attainment is above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of pupils is not consistently rapid as teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Some teachers do not always expect pupils, especially the most able, to move on to hard work quickly enough.
- Pupils are not always encouraged enough to improve their handwriting and spelling.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed pupils' learning in 26 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took into account the 77 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and a letter from a parent, and held informal discussions with a number of parents and carers.
- The inspection team considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 58 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Linda Rowley	Additional inspector
David Westall	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Long Meadow School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are two full-time Reception classes in the early years provision.
- The majority of pupils are White British, with the others coming from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is high at one in four pupils. Very few are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average at one in eight pupils. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average at one in 12 pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- An above-average proportion of pupils, one in eight, joins or leaves the school other than in the Reception Year.
- The privately run before- and after-school club that meets at the school did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teachers' expectations for what pupils should achieve, by:
 - consistently checking that all pupils, especially the most able, move on to harder work as soon as they are able
 - being more vigilant in improving pupils' handwriting and spelling.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and other leaders have a clear vision for the school. They understand what remains to be done for the school to move from good to outstanding. Plans for whole-school improvement are thorough and rightly focus on developing teaching and the progress made by all pupils.
- Systems for checking up on how well teachers are doing are robust and consequently teaching is improving. Teachers and other staff are involved in planning their next steps and training is matched carefully to their individual needs.
- Leaders have established a calm and friendly atmosphere in school that is conducive to good teaching and learning. There is a purposeful approach towards activities in most lessons. Equal opportunities are high on the school's agenda and strong relationships help to ensure that there is no discrimination of any kind.
- Leaders make sure that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent wisely. A wide range of actions are taken to help these pupils to overcome any difficulties in their learning and social development. Additional teaching support ensures that provision is of good quality. Close links are made with parents, and pupils are enabled to take part in a very wide range of extra clubs and visits.
- Good use is made of the additional funding to enhance physical education and increase pupils' involvement in sport. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities to take part in sport and for the last two years every pupil in Year 6 has represented the school in a sporting competition. All pupils, including those who previously were not keen on physical activity, are proud of the badges they have been awarded for taking part.
- Middle leaders support other members of staff well. They know the strengths and next steps in the areas where they take the lead and are aware of how these relate to improving teaching and the pupils' progress.
- The school has developed the revised national curriculum well. As a result, the various subjects are covered effectively, including literacy and numeracy. A particular strength in provision is the diversity of visits and visitors that help to make learning meaningful and enriching. These activities prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. The pupils are immensely proud of the delightful photograph albums in each class. These albums help to remind them of their extensive and interesting real-life experiences at school, including their lessons in the Forest school.
- The school has devised rigorous new ways of checking pupils' progress and these are being put to the test this term. The arrangements are well considered and sensible.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength. There are clear plans to ensure that British values are promoted across subjects and in assemblies. Pupils appreciate the extensive opportunities they have for taking part in and appreciating, art, physical education and music. Various celebrations from different cultures are studied and respected. Pupils learn about topics such as democracy through visits to the civic office and by taking part in debates.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Adults working in the school are checked for suitability and all staff are given training to support them in caring for the pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and are kept safe.
- The school has very positive partnerships with parents, who typically make comments such as, 'varied teaching makes learning engaging' and 'teachers in every class are really friendly'.
- The local authority is providing the right level of effective support for this good and improving school.
- Leadership is not yet outstanding because the drive of leaders to ensure excellence has not yet resulted in outstanding teaching. Consequently, although pupils' progress is good, too few make rapid progress across all year groups and subjects.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are clear about what the school does especially well and how it could develop further. They are actively involved in all aspects of the school and contribute well towards helping to drive the school forward. They are vigilant in checking up that money is spent on improving pupils' progress. They know that teaching at the school is good and understand what is being done to help make teaching even better. They are clear about how leaders check up on how well each member of staff is doing, what is being done to reward good work and to support staff in areas that are less strong. They are aware of how achievement at the school compares with that in other schools nationally. Governors are proud of their involvement in school and how it is strengthened by each member sharing 'what I have done in school' at meetings.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and consequently attendance has improved and is well above average.
- Pupils arrive at school punctually and are willing to learn. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 5, pupils were keen to try using a pair of compasses to draw circles accurately and were not afraid to ask for help when they needed it.
- Pupils, their parents and members of staff are pleased with behaviour at the school and agree that it is good. Pupils work with each other sensibly in class and respect differing points of view. They respond well to competitions such as the 'tidiest cloakroom award'. Pupils work hard in most lessons and there are few instances of low-level disruption.
- Pupils say that there is little bullying and they are happy that members of staff deal with it instantly when it arises. Pupils are fully aware of the school's message that 'once is unkindness and twice is bullying'. They understand that a few pupils are being helped by the school to overcome their 'anger management issues'.
- Pupils are proud of their school and are polite and friendly. They make positive comments such as, 'You are never alone because friends are all around you' and, 'Everyone is friendly.'
- Pupils are good at helping each other. For example, older pupils help younger ones with their reading.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents are very positive about how safe their children feel at school. Pupils agree that they feel safe and say that it is because the staff help to keep them safe.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about safety, including on line safety. Pupils show a good understanding of what they have been taught.
- The school is vigilant in checking up on pupils who may be vulnerable, and takes action when necessary to ensure that they are not at risk.
- Leaders make sure that pupils are kept safe, although they are working on updating their safeguarding policy to reflect the most recent changes in national expectations so that provision can be exemplary.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is effective, including in literacy, reading and mathematics. Teachers provide pupils with clear explanations for their tasks and make sure that lessons are interesting. Consequently, pupils can get on with their work quickly without fuss. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 6, pupils were sad when the lesson ended because they were fully absorbed in solving 'Top Gear' time problems.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with the pupils and, as a result, they manage behaviour well. For example, in an art lesson in Year 6, pupils were quick to listen to the teacher after discussing the work of Magritte and Escher with their work partners.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They are good at sharing new vocabulary with the pupils and this is especially helpful to those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- Teaching assistants are skilful and contribute well to supporting groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or those who are disadvantaged in any way. The regular support for pupils who are finding it difficult to improve their reading is especially helpful.
- Probing questions help pupils to think carefully and help teachers to judge how well the pupils are doing.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and provide helpful praise and next steps for learning. In many classes, teachers provide helpful guidance within lessons and this leads to the best progress being made. This good practice is inconsistent and there are occasions when teachers do not check up enough on how well pupils are doing. When this happens, pupils, especially the most able, carry on with an activity when they are ready for harder work.
- Teachers are not always expecting all pupils to use tidy handwriting or to spell correctly, leading to some pupils repeating mistakes. For example, pupils do not always write using a joined script and some pupils put capital letters in the middle of words and sentences.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception classes working at levels of attainment that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress and consequently attainment on entry to Year 1 is rising and was above average in 2014.
- Achievement overall is good. Attainment has been rising across the school over the last three years and is above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils do better in reading and mathematics than in writing. In writing, some pupils make frequent spelling mistakes and have poor handwriting which is not always corrected by teachers.
- Pupils make good progress during their time at the school, including those who arrive later than in the Reception Year. Good relationships put pupils at ease and help them to want to learn.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because leaders identify their needs quickly and put into place specific and effective additional help.
- The small proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional funding make good progress during their time at the school. They do especially well in literacy because there has been a successful focus on enhancing support given. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 were two terms behind other pupils in the school and nationally in reading, and a year behind in writing and mathematics. Although gaps in attainment remain, they are closing, and attainment data is sometimes affected by pupils who have joined the school recently. The school is developing its own support programme in mathematics and consequently progress in this subject is now good.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They are provided with the choice of moving on to challenging work, although in some lessons they are not moved on to harder work fast enough.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language do so quickly. New arrivals at the school are given immediate support and their learning is checked very frequently to ensure that the support given is effective.
- Pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills and these are used well to support their learning in other subjects.
- Pupils develop well in physical education, reaching the levels of which they are capable. For example, in Year 2, pupils demonstrated speed and agility when running and turning over marker cones on the playground.

The early years provision is good

- The knowledge and skill levels of children on entry to the Reception Year are broadly typical for their age. Children make good progress and achieve well. They settle into school quickly and become confident because routines are clear and firmly established. Children are prepared well for joining Year 1.
- Children listen carefully because members of staff make sure that stories and discussions are relevant to their interests. For example, children enjoyed a funny story about the habits of animals and sharing their special objects with the class.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs do well because teaching is matched effectively to their needs. They are supported well so that they can take part in all activities.
- Children feel safe at school and are kept safe. They know that members of staff will take good care of them. Children behave well because members of staff provide them with good role models and activities are provided to support them in learning to work together and to share.
- Teaching is good. Teachers and other staff provide well-judged support for children because they have an acute awareness of how young children learn. There is a wide range of worthwhile experiences, including an effective system for helping children to learn about the sounds letters make.
- Staff know just when to stand back and when to intervene, including when children are working on activities they have chosen for themselves.
- Leadership and management are good. Leaders ensure that there is the right emphasis on teaching core skills in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff plan well to cover all areas of learning and work together effectively to secure the children's good progress. Very occasionally, learning slows when members of staff do not provide the right level of intervention when children are working on tasks they have chosen for themselves.
- A strong feature of provision is good team work, and constructive links are made with the children's parents. Children's learning is checked frequently and staff have detailed discussions with parents about how well the children are doing.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	132787
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	449679

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Bond
Headteacher	Susan Davies
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 December 2009
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