

# Langdale Free School

95 Warbreck Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY2 9RZ

**Inspection dates** 23–24 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are good. Leaders and governors have created an extremely favourable atmosphere for learning. Staff and pupils are happy to be part of their 'family school' and proudly uphold the values that underpin it.
- The headteacher's leadership is outstanding and she is developing other leaders effectively. Teaching is improving, particularly the teaching of writing. There is good capacity to secure further improvements.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour creates a warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone thrives. Pupils are extremely polite and considerate. They love learning and take pride in their achievements.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Pupils grow in confidence and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils feel extremely safe because they know that their well-being is everyone's top priority.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know the pupils well and plan lessons that are interesting and motivating. They create extremely positive relationships so pupils enjoy learning.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their various starting points when they join the school.
- The early years provision is outstanding. Enthusiasm abounds in the Reception class. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning.
- Governance is effective. Governors promote an ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. They are developing their skills appropriately.
- The school is outward looking and building effective partnerships.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Middle leaders' role in driving improvements in teaching and learning across the school is not developed fully.
- Governors are still developing their strategic role in evaluating and reviewing the impact of provision and that of their own work.
- Coverage of, and learning in, different subjects is variable across classes.
- The most-able pupils are not always provided with work that challenges them and extends their knowledge and skills rapidly, especially in mathematics.
- Skills of reasoning, problem solving and investigation are not developed as well as they could be.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in every class. She conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work across a range of subjects, alongside an analysis of the school's progress tracking for each child.
- The inspector met with leaders, staff and governors to discuss the school's work. She met with pupils to talk about their work and their views of the school, and spoke with many more during break times and lessons.
- The inspector scrutinised documents including self-evaluation, monitoring information and improvement planning. She checked policies and procedures to promote pupils' well-being and safety.
- The inspector took account of 20 responses to Parent View, the online parent questionnaire, and spoke with parents. She took also account of 11 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Langdale Free School opened in September 2013 and is situated in Blackpool. Pupils have joined the school in every year group, having attended many different schools across the area previously.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and has a limit of 18 pupils in each class.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support children known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The majority of pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- Early years education is provided in a Reception class on a full-time basis. A private nursery shares the school site; this is inspected separately and did not form part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- A temporary assistant headteacher has been in post for the last two terms.
- The school works with a local teaching alliance and is considering formalising this partnership. It accesses support from Blackpool and Lancashire local authorities for professional development and to moderate assessments.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, in order to promote outstanding achievement, by:
  - refining teachers' planning to make sure the most-able pupils are provided with work that enables them to achieve the highest standards they are capable of, especially in mathematics
  - ensuring pupils have opportunities to develop their ability to reason, investigate and solve problems
  - making sure pupils experience consistent coverage of subjects in each class, and their knowledge and skills develop progressively as they move through the school.
- Develop leadership further at all levels by:
  - enabling middle leaders to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility, including their role in evaluating the impact of teaching, the quality of pupils' work and their progress
  - developing the role of governors in evaluating the impact of the school's work and their own work by taking account of all available information, including data and reports from leaders at all levels
  - adding detail to the accessibility plan
  - ensuring the headteacher is able to maintain a strategic overview and continue to develop other leaders effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and governors have established a clear vision for the school, which is focused on promoting a love of learning and ensuring the personal development and well-being of all pupils. Staff and pupils talk proudly of the 'family approach'. They uphold the values of being respectful, self-confident and enthusiastic, and praising others when they achieve success, in everything they do.
- Pupils have joined the school in the last two years, having moved from many other schools, with very different experiences and varied learning needs. They are helped to settle quickly and experience success so they grow in confidence. Gaps in learning are addressed through individualised support, where needed.
- The headteacher's regular checks on teaching and pupils' work provide an accurate evaluation of the impact of teaching and incisive feedback supports further improvements. Teachers' performance is managed effectively. Teachers are highly motivated and strive to achieve the high standards expected of them. They participate enthusiastically in professional development to enhance their performance and broaden their expertise. Strong teamwork and mutual respect enable them to share successes and learn from each other.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership to improve teaching, promote pupils' well-being and raise their achievement. Her strategic overview and continuing development of other leaders is pivotal to ensuring the school's capacity for further improvement. She has been well supported by a temporary assistant headteacher.
- Middle leaders are relatively new to their roles and are developing their skills well, with coaching from the headteacher. Leaders of literacy and mathematics have ensured that policies are implemented consistently, for example in marking and the approach to teaching writing. However, their role in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, checking pupils' progress and driving improvements is not developed fully. Leaders of other subjects do not have a view of the quality of teaching in each subject across the whole school.
- The curriculum is planned effectively to give pupils a thorough grounding in literacy and mathematical skills as well as a broad experience through interesting topics and themes. Leaders are keen to ensure pupils' skills are developed systematically in the full range of subjects while maintaining this motivating topic-based approach, and are working towards this. Pupils value the range of clubs they can access before and after school, which enrich their experience. They really enjoy Spanish and music from specialist teachers.
- The promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a significant strength. These aspects are promoted innovatively in various subjects and integrated into the ethos of the school. Pupils develop as well-rounded, confident, reflective and respectful individuals. They have a good understanding of British values such as democracy, the rule of law and respect for people from different cultures; they demonstrate these values in their behaviour.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring all pupils achieve well, feel safe and develop skills to equip them for the future. Relationships are excellent. Discrimination is not evident in the school but there are procedures to tackle it robustly if it should arise.
- Leaders make good use of additional sports funding to broaden pupils' participation. They have made best use of the limited outdoor space to enable pupils to participate safely in team games and exercise. Pupils' experiences are widened through participation in activities off the premises such as ice skating and swimming, and plans are in place for rock climbing and ballroom dancing from September.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and very effective in keeping pupils safe in school.
- All parents that responded to Parent View say their children are happy, well looked after and feel safe. All would recommend the school to another parent. Those who spoke or wrote to the inspector endorsed these views citing, for example, 'the genuine warmth and enthusiasm' from staff and saying, 'children do really well here', 'the headteacher is amazing, really approachable, and teachers take time to talk to you'.
- Leaders are outward looking and work with other schools, the local teaching alliance and local authorities to extend their expertise, moderate the accuracy of assessments and share good practice. Such partnerships have benefited all staff and leaders are seeking to strengthen these links.
- Improvement planning is focused on the most important priorities and all the staff pull together to ensure plans are carried through. There has been good improvement in pupils' writing following the whole-school focus in this area. Middle leaders are developing their skills well and are keen to use their developing expertise, providing opportunities for more distributed leadership. These strong foundations provide good capacity to secure further improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a good range of expertise and set high expectations for staff and pupils. They ensure the school's vision, to inspire a love of learning, is promoted successfully. They have a good understanding of the school's main strengths and areas requiring further development and they challenge leaders robustly. They are still developing their roles in evaluating their own impact and the impact of the school's work, having formed relatively recently.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher effectively; they ensure that teachers are rewarded for good performance and do not progress in salary unless it is merited.
- Governors ensure all statutory duties are carried out and that policies are reviewed and updated as required. The accessibility policy lacks sufficient detail about the steps they have already taken to make the site more accessible or their plans to develop access further.
- Governors make sure the pupil premium is spent appropriately to enhance the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The purchase of the minibus is ensuring pupils get to school punctually and has improved attendance. Individualised support enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve just as well as others in school and to access the full range of enrichment activities.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Community spirit is strong; pupils all feel part of the 'school family' and treat each other with respect. They conduct themselves with self-discipline, consideration and care for others in shared spaces. The 'five rules' that they defined – to be kind, look after everyone, move calmly around the school, be polite and do as I am asked – are respected by everyone.
- Pupils cooperate and support each other exceptionally well. In the playground, they are keen to share their toys, play team or circle games, and wait patiently for their turn at skipping.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They come to school wanting to learn and achieve to the best of their ability. They participate in lessons with enthusiasm and take great pride in their work. 'I love Langdale' is a common refrain.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well in teaching and through the ethos of the school. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of British values, such as democracy, respect for different cultures and the rule of law because these are taught explicitly and modelled in school.
- Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to take responsibility and use their initiative, for example as play leaders, council members, head boy and head girl.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel extremely safe in school because relationships are affirming, everyone respects the rules, and they know they can go to staff with any concerns. Pupils have come from many different schools with many different experiences and this is extremely important to them.
- Pupils feel safe from bullying. They are aware of different types of bullying, including the harm caused by remarks that are racist, homophobic or relate to appearance. They say it does not happen and parents endorse this.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe from risks on the roads, in the community, on the internet and in social media. These messages are reinforced effectively by the community police officer who visits the school.
- Attendance is average and improving as leaders are impressing on families the importance of not taking holidays during school term-times.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The strong, encouraging relationships fostered by teachers help pupils develop confidence in their ability, take pride in their work and make good gains in their learning.
- Teachers know their pupils well and work hard to plan activities that appeal to their interests; as one pupil said, 'Teachers put fun twists in lessons, so it's fun as well as learning lots.' Teachers use questioning effectively to probe and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teachers develop pupils' independence in learning successfully from the very early stages. In Year 1, for

example, pupils know just what to do next if they finish their work and always keep busy with interesting activities.

- The teaching of writing has improved considerably in the last year, following professional development. Pupils rise to teachers' high expectations for presentation and productivity. They enjoy writing in a range of subjects for different purposes, and use their imagination and initiative effectively.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups. Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs are very well supported and fully included in lessons, so their progress is always good and often better.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work helps pupils to know how well they are doing. Marking is particularly effective in writing; pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling show good improvement as a result. Pupils say, 'It really helps me when I'm writing on my own, because I can look back and remind myself what I need to do better.' Marking in mathematics helps pupils to resolve misunderstandings successfully, but it is not as effective in extending the skills of those pupils who complete their work easily.
- Pupils' progress is tracked carefully in reading, writing and mathematics. This, together with the in-depth knowledge of pupils' learning needs, ensures leaders and teachers have a good overview of how well each pupil is doing. Teachers use such information well to plan additional support if progress slows.
- There is some variability in teachers' use of assessment to plan activities that extend the learning of the most-able pupils, especially in mathematics. At times, the activities provided for pupils are not sufficiently challenging because all pupils in the class complete the same activities to start with. Although the most-able pupils may extend their learning on completion of these, time is spent going over things they already know and can do.
- Pupils are highly motivated by the interesting activities that teachers plan for them in their topic work. For example, in the Years 4 and 5 class, pupils were engrossed in composing an anthem to represent different cultures in ancient Greece. They collaborated effectively in groups, drawing on their prior knowledge of these cultures, researching further on the internet and using their musical ability. They used their initiative, learned from each other and made excellent progress. The resulting anthems were very impressive.
- Pupils' experience of different subjects varies from class to class. In some classes, for example, topic work focuses on history and arts subjects more than on geography and science, so pupils do not develop skills evenly and systematically in all subjects. There is variability in the extent that teaching provides pupils with opportunities to conduct investigations, reason and solve problems, especially in mathematics and science.

### **The achievement of pupils is good**

- Since joining the school within the last two years, pupils have made good progress in each year group in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with lower starting points and those with disabilities or who have special educational needs often make more rapid progress because they are supported very well to fill gaps in their learning.
- The most-able pupils make good progress but they do not always make the most rapid progress they are capable of. This is because the tasks they are given are not always sufficiently challenging to extend their skills or deepen their knowledge, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils develop very good language and communication skills. They acquire a rich vocabulary and express their views with confidence because they know they are valued. Their literacy skills develop effectively. Pupils enjoy writing in different subjects for a range of purposes and they are productive. Reading is taught well across the school, so pupils develop a love of reading and use their skills to research and read for pleasure.
- Pupils develop good mathematical knowledge, including of number facts, shape, measures and data handling. Their ability to recall number facts is particularly good. However, they have limited opportunities to apply this knowledge in other subjects and different contexts.
- The very small cohort in Year 6 last year means it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons with national benchmarks for 2014. At Key Stage 1, pupils attained slightly above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All pupils in the current Year 6 and Year 2 cohorts are working at levels expected for their age or above in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening, which assesses pupils' ability to link sounds and letters, was below average in 2014 but rose significantly in 2015, as teachers have improved their skills in teaching.
- It is not possible to compare the attainment of disadvantaged pupils with that of others as there were too

few pupils in the Year 6 cohort last year. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils lower down the school are being checked carefully and gaps are closing.

- Leaders have set higher targets for pupils to ensure that more pupils are able to achieve the higher levels in the future.

### **The early years provision**

### **is outstanding**

- Children in the early years Reception class love coming to school and their teacher loves teaching them. Enthusiasm abounds; children are eager to share their achievements and celebrate those of others.
- Children enter the Reception class with variable knowledge and skills. The knowledge and skills of children in last year's cohort were very varied, as the children had attended a range of pre-school provision. The children in this year's class have mostly come from the nursery that shares the school site and entered with knowledge and skills typical or above for their age.
- The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. The early years leader, who is also the class teacher, tracks the progress of children accurately and thoroughly from the start. She sets her sights high for their achievement. Records of their learning journeys are wonderfully rich in examples of the children enjoying learning and achieving highly in all areas. Children are very well prepared for their move into Key Stage 1.
- The proportion achieving a good level of development was above average in 2014. The moderated assessments for this year show that the majority of children exceeded the expected level in the early learning goals in all areas, having made very good progress from their various starting points. The children with lower starting points and those who have special educational needs made exceptional progress.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Children are taught to link letters and sounds effectively in phonics sessions. They develop an early interest in reading and writing because they can achieve success. Their language and communication skills are excellent. In keeping with the rest of the children in the school, they develop confidence and a rich vocabulary because adults model language effectively and are interested in their views.
- Children's mathematical skills are similarly developed well. During the inspection, the children delighted in getting coins out of blocks of ice. During the fun they learned about properties of ice, how to identify coins and how to add their value.
- The teacher and teaching assistant work well together, ensuring that best use is made of the limited outdoor space as an outdoor classroom and to develop children's physical skills.
- Children are curious and keen to learn. Much emphasis is placed on children becoming self-initiating, confident and independent learners. They choose from a range of stimulating activities that further their key skills very effectively. Children particularly enjoy making their books, which they do with flair, illustrating and writing them competently.
- Children are exceptionally well behaved. They share resources, enjoy cooperating and show respect for each other. They feel extremely safe because they are well cared for and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents are fully involved and well informed about the children's progress. They are extremely pleased with the provision.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140200
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	450210

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	117
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Rendell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Stallard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected as an academy
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 354812
<b>Fax number</b>	01253 354812
<b>Email address</b>	c.stallard@langdaleschool.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

