

Longlands Primary School

Linden Way, Fairfields, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 1QU

Inspection dates

17–18 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust have driven significant improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes since the school converted to become an academy.
- The head of school has a clear vision which permeates the school. Pupils demonstrate the school's core values of 'aspiration', 'resilience', 'respect' and 'cooperation'.
- Senior and middle leaders are proactive and skilled in what they do. They check the quality of teaching and provide good-quality feedback to staff on how to improve.
- Outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 have improved significantly. Pupils make good progress and, in 2017, attainment at the end of Year 6 was similar to national levels.
- The chief executive officer of the trust is astute and ambitious for the school. He and other trust staff offer strong challenge and support to leaders. The local governing body is passionate, committed and knows the school well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and English. They use this to match work appropriately to pupils' needs. However, sometimes the most able pupils do not get enough challenge.
- Teachers appreciate the regular training and the sharing of good practice to improve their teaching skills.
- The proportion of boys who achieve the expected standard in Year 1 phonics checks remains low. Teachers require further training to improve their phonics teaching.
- Staff, pupils and parents are a united team. Relationships at all levels are positive, so pupils are happy and settled.
- Pupils enjoy sport, music, various leadership roles and the range of trips that they go on. These experiences contribute well to their personal development, but particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are exemplary. Incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare. The leadership and monitoring of attendance are superb. Attendance rates continue to rise.
- Leaders have put significant effort into improving teaching and outcomes in key stages 1 and 2. As a result, provision in the early years has weakened. Staff's questioning does not sufficiently develop children's thinking. Assessment information is not used precisely enough to plan interesting and challenging learning activities.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years by ensuring that staff:
 - ask probing questions in order to deepen children’s understanding
 - use high-quality observations and assessments to plan and deliver learning activities that stimulate and challenge children.
- Improve the quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide consistently challenging activities for the most able pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - providing training for staff so that phonics teaching is more precise and outcomes in phonics for boys improve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The head of school has worked closely with staff, pupils and parents to create a clear vision for the school. Leaders and staff are ambitious and committed to doing the very best for pupils. Parents fully support the school's leaders and how they direct the school. Pupils receive a good-quality education at Longlands Primary School.
- The chief executive of the multi-academy trust and the head of school have achieved significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Working with the school's capable leaders, they have successfully addressed weaker teaching in key stages 1 and 2. As a result, outcomes for pupils are rising.
- Senior and middle leaders are proactive and focused on improving teaching. They use their strong classroom practice to influence and develop the teaching of others. For example, the mathematics leader has worked closely alongside staff to develop their understanding of effective mathematics teaching. Teaching in mathematics has improved, and teachers who once required support are now being used to share their good practice.
- Leaders carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and the work in pupils' books. Teachers receive precise and useful feedback, so that they can make necessary adjustments to their teaching. Leaders use this monitoring information to identify common areas that need improving and to implement good-quality training for teachers. Staff have not had sufficient phonics training to enable them to provide good support for pupils, but particularly for boys.
- Leaders use performance management appropriately to support and challenge the quality of teaching. Teachers are set targets that align to areas of whole-school improvement, but with flexibility to address their own individual professional needs. Pay decisions link effectively to the outcomes of this performance management process.
- There is a strong sense of trust and good communication between leaders and staff. As a result, there is a developing culture of reflection and debate. Leaders and teachers decided that assessment of pupils' progress needed to be more accurate. They worked together to refine it. The accuracy of teachers' assessment has improved and is now secure.
- Following academy conversion, the main priority was to address weaknesses in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. This significant and successful piece of work took leaders time and attention, so that teaching and provision in the early years weakened. Leaders have the capacity to make the necessary changes.
- The special educational needs coordinator understands pupils' individual needs well and uses this knowledge to put in place precise additional support. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning. Leaders make good use of additional funding for this group of pupils, and parents appreciate the quality of support that their children receive.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to secure good academic

progress and personal development for disadvantaged pupils. Plans are thoughtful, detailed and analysed effectively for impact. For example, leaders implemented a programme to develop pupils' speech and language skills in Year 1. Consequently, pupils' spoken language and vocabulary showed significant improvement.

- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is relevant and purposeful. For example, pupils' topic of 'Shropshire' is followed up with a trip to a local landmark, 'the Wrekin', so that pupils can carry out a local study in geography and history. Other subjects, like English, are included in the topic when pupils study the myth of 'the Wrekin Giant'. Pupils are excited about the topics that they cover and develop effective skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of different subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well catered for. Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. They develop good morals as they discuss human rights in class and in assemblies. Pupils lead fundraising events for charity and speak confidently about how their work is helping others who are less fortunate than themselves.
- Leaders make very good use of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport. It is a key strength in the school. A high number of pupils attend the wide-ranging opportunities for physical activity and sport at lunchtimes and after school. Furthermore, the school has a strong reputation for competing in a range of inter-school competitions. Staff have benefited from professional development to improve the quality of their PE teaching.
- The school's website is a strength. Governors and leaders ensure that a range of relevant and purposeful information is available for parents. The website has extensive information about the curriculum and how parents can support their children at home.

Governance of the school

- Trustees provide effective support and challenge. The chief executive officer is astute. His strong leadership and ambition have been an essential part of the improvements.
- Trustees carry out regular independent reviews in order to gauge the views of stakeholders and to check the quality of teaching and outcomes in the school. Consequently, the trust knows the school well.
- Trustees use specialist staff from the multi-academy trust to enhance the leadership of the school. For example, the music specialist, the education welfare officer and the mathematics leader provide highly effective support.
- Governors:
 - are committed and proud to serve their local community
 - know the school's strengths and the priorities for improvement
 - provide challenge and support to leaders through meetings and school visits; the level of challenge provided to leaders on pupil performance data has gradually become more rigorous over time
 - have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that procedures for safeguarding pupils are very effective. Staff are well trained, vigilant and have a very good understanding of their responsibilities. The designated safeguarding leader works closely with the deputy safeguarding leader to discuss concerns that are raised by staff. Leaders make sure that concerns are followed through tenaciously and that external agencies are involved in a timely manner. Consequently, the culture for safeguarding in the school is a strength.
- Pupils are also very aware of how to keep themselves safe. Staff teach aspects of safety through assemblies, trips and in the wider curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils recently went on a trip to a Royal Air Force base to take part in a range of activities involving personal safety. Pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet is particularly strong. They are well aware of the dangers of the internet and know exactly what to do if they were concerned about something online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils' progress across key stages 1 and 2 is good because teaching is lively and effective. Teachers are reflective about their practice and are keen to improve. This positive culture of improvement has contributed positively to the quality of teaching.
- Teachers' effective questioning is a noteworthy characteristic of strong teaching. For example, in a maths lesson about division, pupils were asked 'how' and 'why' questions to show that they could demonstrate exactly what was happening in their calculations. Teachers' skilful questions enable pupils to think for themselves and develop their understanding.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work and progress has developed over time and is accurate. Teachers have a good understanding of the standards expected for pupils' ages and where pupils need to be challenged. This means that most work is matched well to their needs. However, challenge for the most able pupils is not consistent. Teachers lack a deep understanding of how to challenge pupils working at a higher standard.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics, particularly by the end of key stage 2, have improved significantly. Teachers use the 'bronze', 'silver' and 'gold' challenges to match activities appropriately to pupils' needs. Pupils regularly apply their skills and understanding by solving problems. Teachers also make good use of practical resources to help pupils understand difficult mathematical ideas. For example, in a division lesson, pupils were using objects to demonstrate what was happening in their written number sentence.
- Pupils' higher-level reading skills are developed effectively. Teachers use good-quality texts and questions, so that pupils get regular practice of retrieval and inference skills. This approach, coupled with a strong focus on reading for pleasure, is improving the standards in reading in the school. Leaders have developed a wonderful library area for pupils which further supports the positive culture for reading in the school.
- Staff in the early years and in key stage 1 require further support and training to

improve the quality of phonics teaching. Some teaching of phonics lacks precision and challenge, which is holding some pupils back, particularly boys.

- The teaching of writing is effective. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables pupils to acquire appropriate skills in grammar, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling. Pupils apply this knowledge effectively into longer pieces of writing. In stronger teaching, pupils are challenged to extend their vocabulary and use highly ambitious words or phrases.
- Parents have a positive view about the quality of teaching and the progress that their children make. Almost all parents agree that their children are well taught and all parents feel that their children make good progress. Parents also support the exciting homework projects that pupils are given. For example, pupils' three-dimensional models and written work about British landmarks formed an impressive display in school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils' emotional, physical and social development is at the forefront of their education. Consequently, pupils love attending school and talk with pride about the range of opportunities that they receive. The school is a hive of activity before school starts. Pupils have access to music, singing and physical activity. Further clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school continue to help identify and develop pupils' individual interests and talents. The music specialist is having a noticeable impact on the high standard of music and performance across the school.
- Pupils trust staff to keep them safe and help them with their learning. During a discussion with inspectors, a comment included, 'I think Longlands is a safe and educational place. Teachers support you and make it fun.' Staff develop good relationships with pupils and know them as individuals. As a result, pupils show confidence and enjoy learning.
- Pupils enjoy the different positions of responsibility on offer at Longlands Primary School. There are sports captains, ECO leaders, school council members, play leaders and a range of other responsibilities. School council members talked passionately to inspectors about how they arranged a coffee morning and raised money for an important charity. Pupils take their roles seriously and they develop important life skills, like responsibility and cooperation.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because of the school's wider-ranging strategies to teach them about safety. Pupils can articulate the different forms of bullying and know to seek an adult if they see or experience bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Behaviour in classrooms, around school and outside at lunchtime is exemplary. Pupils

are courteous and respectful of adults and of each other. Their first-class behaviour leads to a highly positive and harmonious learning environment. Staff reinforce positive behaviour by giving praise and rewards, which in turn motivates pupils. On the extremely rare occasions when low-level disruption occurs, staff manage it skilfully.

- Staff model and teach the school's core values and qualities well. Pupils know what 'aspiration', 'resilience', 'respect' and 'cooperation' mean and they demonstrate them with increasing maturity as they move through school. In a Year 2 reading lesson, the teacher skilfully introduced the concept of resilience. Pupils were able to prove how a character in the story could stick at something without giving up. The school's focus on values and qualities has a significant impact on pupils' outstanding behaviour.
- Leaders monitor behaviour very well. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour or bullying recorded. Pupils who have significant emotional and/or behavioural needs are given highly individualised support. As a result, they are well integrated into lessons and their behaviour improves over time.
- The leadership and monitoring of pupil attendance are superb. The school's education welfare officer has an excellent relationship with families who require support to improve their children's attendance. She works highly effectively with leaders to monitor the attendance rates of groups and individuals, and is quick to challenge poor attendance. She also leads engaging assemblies with pupils to focus on and reward those pupils whose attendance at school is high. Pupils' attendance has risen sharply over time and no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The quality of work in pupils' books, the school's assessment information and national test data show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics during their time at Longlands Primary School.
- Outcomes by the end of key stage 2 have risen significantly since the school converted to an academy. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was just above the national level. This was a 10% increase on 2016.
- Standards in mathematics have improved significantly. Teachers are providing increasingly effective challenge and pupils are applying their understanding more regularly. This is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. In 2017, at the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was above the national level.
- Some of the most able pupils do not make the accelerated progress that they are capable of. In 2017, at the end of key stage 2, progress for this group of pupils weakened because there was insufficient challenge in lessons for them to reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils are gradually catching up with other pupils nationally. In 2017 at the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils' progress improved significantly when compared to 2016. The school's assessment information shows that there are some year groups where disadvantaged pupils are doing better than other pupils in school. Leaders also identified where disadvantaged pupils were not doing as well and put in

place precise additional support to accelerate their progress.

- End of key stage 1 outcomes were strong in 2016. Higher proportions of pupils achieved the expected and higher standards than national levels. In 2017, outcomes declined slightly, but there were more pupils who required additional support. Leaders have provided convincing information to show that this year group made good progress from their starting points, particularly in English.
- Overall outcomes for the Year 1 phonics screening test in the last two years have been broadly in line with national levels. However, during this time the proportion of boys achieving the expected standard has not been high enough. Phonics teaching is not challenging enough to accelerate boys' progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with appropriate support in lessons. The special educational needs coordinator tracks pupils' progress carefully and uses this information to put in place precise additional support. Consequently, pupils make good progress across a range of subjects.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leadership of the early years requires improvement. There has been not been enough focus on developing the quality of teaching and provision in this part of the school.
- Adults' assessments of children's learning lack precision. Feedback on learning does not provide detailed enough information about what individual children have done well or what they need to do next. As a result, teachers do not use assessment information precisely enough to plan activities which challenge children's learning. Children find learning too difficult or too easy and some children do not make the progress that they are capable of. When activities do not meet children's needs, they can lose interest and become distracted.
- Provision in the indoor learning environment does not give children purposeful, stimulating or challenging activities. There are limited opportunities for children to develop their writing skills. As a result, children do not develop their knowledge, understanding and skills as well as they could.
- The teaching of phonics requires improvement. Adults model sounds effectively and provide opportunities for children to practise saying and writing sounds. However, not enough time is spent checking that children have a secure understanding before moving on to the next activity. As a result, not all children develop their phonics skills successfully.
- Adults' questions do not consistently challenge children to think deeply about their learning. Not enough questions ask children to explain their understanding or further develop their thinking. Consequently, children do not develop their understanding as well as they should and their progress is restricted.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They also know which areas of learning need improvement and which groups of children are performing less well than others. However, leaders are in the early stages of using this information to improve teaching and learning.
- Leaders' assessments show that most children typically enter Reception with skills and

knowledge which are below the level expected for their age. Typically, children make adequate progress from their starting points. In 2017, a high proportion of children achieved a good level of development. This was an improvement on the previous year. Unusually for the school, a large number of children entered Reception in this year with skills and knowledge that were typical for their age. Books show that most children made sufficient progress from their starting points in Reception. There are some examples where pupils make good progress. However, children's progress is occasionally too slow when provision does not meet their needs or does not challenge them enough.

- Staff have improved the outdoor learning environment. They make sure that a range of activities are available to spark children's interest and skills. As a result, activities are purposeful and give children experiences across the different areas of learning.
- Leaders work hard to involve parents in their children's learning. The 'stay and play' and information sessions provide parents with opportunities to find out about what their children are learning.
- Clear routines are in place to promote good behaviour. Children have positive attitudes to learning and cooperate and play well together. Children are able to share and take turns appropriately and to manage their feelings well. Relationships with adults are good.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	141368
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10037085

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chief executive officer	Geoff Pettengell
Headteacher	Zillah Cope
Telephone number	01630652312
Website	www.longlandsprimarieschol.co.uk
Email address	admin.longlands@longlands.sat.coop
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a sponsored academy and is part of the Shrewsbury Academies Trust. Longlands Primary School converted to become an academy in January 2015. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2014, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The executive headteacher is the chief executive officer of the trust and a national leader of education.
- There is a local governing body at the school which takes responsibility for challenging and supporting leaders to develop educational outcomes for pupils, as well as being a link to the local community.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 19 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation. These included assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors considered 12 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Claire Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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