

Long Field Academy

Ambleside Way, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0BN

Inspection dates

31 January–1 February 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Long Field Academy has continued to improve since the last inspection. Pupils' progress and attainment are now good.
- The principal provides strong and high-quality leadership. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what they need to do to make the school even better.
- Pupils' progress has become more rapid in most subjects. The proportion of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate is above the national average. Further improvement is needed, however, in English.
- Most disadvantaged pupils make good progress. The difference between their progress and that of other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers use good subject knowledge to enrich learning in lessons. Sometimes, however, teachers' questioning skills do not encourage pupils to think hard enough and understand their work at a deeper level.
- The curriculum is good. The use of alternative education is effective. The pupils who attend alternative education achieve well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Positive relationships between staff and pupils help to ensure that pupils are happy and feel safe at school.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and are keen to do well.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now average. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, although improving, has not yet caught up with that of their peers.
- The number of pupils who receive a fixed-term exclusion for poor behaviour has fallen. Disadvantaged pupils, however, continue to be excluded for fixed terms more than their peers.
- Staff know the pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities well. They achieve well because they benefit from good support.
- The governing body and the academy trust play a valuable role in the school's success. They provide senior leaders with good support and an appropriate level of challenge.
- Parents and carers value the school's work. They are particularly approving of the principal's leadership. Parents recognise the improvements made to the quality of their children's education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, and accelerate pupils' progress further, by ensuring that teachers routinely:
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to develop the more difficult skills in English, especially the boys
 - ask probing questions which help pupils to explore their ideas in greater depth and develop a deeper understanding in their learning so that they achieve higher standards.
- Improve disadvantaged pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning by ensuring that leaders develop more effective ways to:
 - ensure that they attend more regularly and reduce the number of them who receive a fixed-term exclusions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The dedicated and determined leadership of the principal, well supported by other school leaders and members of the academy trust, has improved the quality of education. Leaders and governors have high aspirations for pupils. They are committed to ensuring that pupils continue to make good progress. Pupils' progress has become more rapid and their attainment has improved. Both are now similar to national averages.
- Staff are supportive of leaders' work to improve the school's effectiveness. They are enthusiastic and committed to improving the school further. Staff morale is good.
- Pupils and parents recognise the school's improvement since the last inspection. They share their gratitude for the efforts made by all staff, but are particularly appreciative of the principal's work. A growing number of parents are now choosing to send their children to the school.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders' actions to improve the effectiveness of the school are focused and successful. Senior leaders are proud of, but not complacent about, their achievements. They are very clear about what they need to do next. Leaders' improvement plans are detailed. They include ambitious and measurable success criteria.
- The curriculum is appropriate for all pupils. Leaders ensure that they provide pupils with a broad range of subjects at key stage 4. Pupils benefit from effective guidance when considering their option choices. A high proportion of pupils choose to study the English Baccalaureate subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are good. Enrichment activities and a range of extra-curricular clubs provide pupils with opportunities to develop other skills and follow other interests.
- Leaders make meticulous use of the school's assessment system. They ensure that it provides reliable and accurate information. Careful reflection has led to changes in the key stage 3 assessment system. Leaders and teachers have developed a clearer system for measuring pupils' progress. However, this system is new and leaders do not yet know how effective it will be.
- Leaders make regular checks on pupils' progress. They make good use of the information available to identify any pupil underperformance. Leaders, and other staff, hold in-depth discussions about individual pupils' progress, as well as that of different groups of pupils. They provide effective support for pupils who fall behind.
- Leaders have continued to improve the quality of teaching. They provide teachers, and teaching assistants, with whole-school and individual training to meet their needs. Leaders make effective use of teacher support plans to rapidly improve practice, when needed. Newly qualified teachers are provided with good support.
- Middle leaders play an active role in improving pupils' progress. They make checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their respective subjects, alongside senior leaders. Middle leaders know what action to take to improve any identified

weaknesses. This is particularly the case in English.

- Leaders have put in place a school marking and feedback policy which teachers use consistently. Pupils appreciate and make valuable use of the feedback teachers provide to improve their learning.
- Leaders make effective use of the extra funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Successful approaches to improve pupils' understanding ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- The extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used well to accelerate their progress. For most disadvantaged pupils, their progress and attainment are improving. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance, however, is below that of their peers. Equally, the number of incidents of poor behaviour is higher for disadvantaged pupils than for other pupils.
- Leaders can point to the successful use of the Year 7 catch-up funding. Pupils who join the school with below-expected attainment in English and/or mathematics are making good progress. Leaders are aware that they have yet to measure the effectiveness of some of the actions they take to accelerate the progress of more pupils.

Governance of the school

- The academy trust provides the school with high-quality support. Members of the academy trust are knowledgeable and experienced. They know what actions to take to continue the school's journey of improvement. The academy trust also provides the governing body and school leaders with appropriate challenge.
- Members of the academy trust work closely with school leaders. Detailed and accurate academy trust reviews provide leaders with focused areas for further development. The academy trust also provides school leaders and other staff with access to high-quality training, networking opportunities and access to best practice approaches.
- Members of the school's local governing body are professional, skilled and dedicated to the roles they fulfil. They know what the school does well and where improvements are still required. Senior leaders provide the governing body with a wide range of information about the school's effectiveness. Governors use this information well to ask pertinent questions about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Required checks are made on all adults who work in the school. Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding training and updates. Staff understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. There are clear systems in place to help them do this.
- Safeguarding leaders maintain detailed and accurate records. Effective relationships with external agencies provide leaders and pupils with any support they may need. The link governor for safeguarding, although new to the role, has made a comprehensive start to checking on the school's approaches to keeping children safe.
- Pupils were confident when explaining to the inspectors about feeling safe. Leaders

ensure that they provide pupils with relevant and pertinent guidance and advice on how to keep themselves safe. Parents agree that their children are safe and looked after well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Relationships are positive between adults and pupils. Lessons are typically conducted in a calm and productive manner. Pupils have time to think and work without distraction.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to provide pupils with engaging and motivating activities. Pupils use subject vocabulary accurately, and with confidence, to show good knowledge of the topics they are learning about.
- Pupils take pride in their work. The presentation of pupils' work is of a high standard. Pupils' handwriting has improved since the last inspection. Teachers, in different subjects, take opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills.
- Pupils play an active role in assessing their own learning. Teachers use this, together with their own checks on pupils' learning, to plan tasks that meet pupils' needs.
- Teachers also use assessment information to provide pupils with opportunities to fill any gaps in their learning. For example, in Year 7 mathematics different pupils were practising different algebraic skills that they had not previously understood. Other pupils who had understood the earlier learning progressed onto tasks that were more difficult.
- Teaching assistants provide pupils with helpful strategies to aid their learning. At times, teaching assistants work adeptly with the teacher to provide quick help. For example, in Year 8 English the teaching assistant provided timely support for pupils so that they could quickly show their increased understanding to the teacher.
- Some teachers challenge the pupils through the demanding activities they set. At times, teachers use questions to extend pupils' learning, develop their skills, and increase their understanding. This is not routinely the case, however. Sometimes, pupils do not think hard enough to reach the high standards in their learning they should.
- Teachers make valuable use of homework. Pupils explained how helpful this is in increasing their confidence and in extending their knowledge and skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Long Field Academy is a small, inclusive school which tailors its support and care well to meet the needs of all its pupils. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other, for staff and for visitors. They take great pride in their school.
- Pupils benefit from a wide-ranging educational programme that supports their good

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities to develop pupils' self-confidence are embedded into their daily routines. Pupils are confident and articulate in their communications.

- Pupils learn about and understand the importance of British values. During tutor time, pupils were deeply engaged in a discussion about tolerance and individual liberty.
- The school's records show that incidents of bullying and racism are rare. Pupils confirmed this during their discussions with the inspectors and in their responses to Ofsted's surveys. They explained to the inspectors that when any incidents do occur, members of staff are quick to deal with them.
- Leaders provide pupils with a variety of extra-curricular activities. These range from charity and community-based work to enrichment days. The school has also recently become an associate school of The Royal Shakespeare Company.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective independent careers advice and guidance. This raises pupils' aspirations and ensures that they move on to accessible and appropriate career pathways.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, considerate and welcoming. At social times, their conduct is good. Pupils told the inspectors that behaviour was typically good and pupils who responded to Ofsted's online survey shared this view. Most parents also agreed that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.
- Most staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils respond quickly to adult instructions. Incidents of poor behaviour are reducing. Pupils are keen to learn and they cooperate well in class with adults, whom they respect.
- The number of pupils who receive a fixed-term exclusion for poor conduct is above the national average. Although the number of fixed-term exclusions is reducing, it remains high for disadvantaged pupils.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. The number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is increasing. This has reduced leaders' effectiveness in improving the attendance of these pupils. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved but not at the same rate as for their peers. Leaders recognise that further actions are required to rectify this difference.
- The behaviour and attendance of the small number of pupils who attend alternative education is good. Leaders maintain regular contact with staff from different educational establishments to check on the pupils who attend them. They keep detailed records of how well the pupils are doing.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. In 2017, pupils' overall progress at the end of key stage 4 was average. Pupils of different abilities all made good progress and the lower-attaining pupils made above-average progress. The school's assessment information indicates that, for current pupils, most are making

good progress. In some subjects, pupils' progress is accelerating. Pupils' workbooks, sampled during the inspection, confirmed this good progress.

- Pupils' attainment across a range of different subjects is good. A large number of pupils choose to study the English Baccalaureate subjects. Pupils attain well in these subjects, especially the most able pupils, and achieve above the national average. Pupils make good progress and attain well in most of their different subjects.
- Leaders provide pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities with effective support. Leaders make good use of the school's assessment system to make regular checks on these pupils' progress, which is typically good.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has shown a continued improvement since the previous inspection and is now average. Leaders are aware, however, that progress in English has not been as rapid. They have taken action to address this and have made changes to the teaching of English. Pupils currently in the school are now making faster progress in English. Boys, however, especially in key stage 3, are making less progress than the girls.
- Leaders, supported by the trust, have prioritised the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils' progress has improved. They now make similar progress to their peers and to other pupils nationally. Leaders are aware, however, that in key stage 3 their actions have not consistently accelerated pupils' progress in some subjects. They are taking effective action to rectify this.
- Leaders' effectiveness in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills for pupils who start Year 7 below the expected national standards is good. These pupils make good progress. Some pupils make rapid progress and catch up with their peers. The pupils inspectors listened to during the inspection read with confidence and fluency. Pupils' understanding of what they were reading was also strong. Leaders are taking effective action to accelerate pupils' progress where it remains less rapid.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly better prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. The proportion of pupils who do not progress to some form of education, employment or training is very low. However, it is a little higher for disadvantaged pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	138628
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10041572

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	579
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Debi Williamson
Principal	Christopher Haggett
Telephone number	01664 561234
Website	www.longfieldtrust.org.uk
Email address	ssstaff@longfield.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2016

Information about this school

- Long Field is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The school is an academy, sponsored by The Spencer Academies Trust. There are currently 12 schools within this multi-academy trust. The trustees have overall responsibility for the governance of the school. The trust has delegated several responsibilities to the governing body. The trust provides high-quality support to the school.
- The majority of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is a little below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is increasing and is now above average. The proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- A small number of pupils are taught off-site. These pupils attend education provided by the Melton Behaviour Partnership.

- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 23 lessons. Some of this learning was observed together with senior leaders. Discussions took place with school staff, members of the governing body, and academy trustees.
- The inspectors met with two groups of pupils and talked to pupils informally. They took account of the 18 pupil responses to Ofsted's online survey and the school's own pupil survey. Inspectors also observed tutor time, pupils' social time and listened to some Year 7 pupils reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, planning and monitoring documentation, the work in pupils' books, records relating to attendance and behaviour and the school's information on pupils' current attainment and progress in all subjects.
- Inspectors took into account the 76 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, including the 61 free-text comments and one letter. They also considered the 34 staff responses to Ofsted's online surveys. The school's own surveys were reviewed.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. Inspectors reviewed the school's website to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of specified information.

Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sian Hampton	Ofsted Inspector
Gulbanu Kader	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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