

Longshaw Primary School

Longshaw Road, Chingford, London E4 6LH

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has undergone a period of turbulence, with changes in school leadership and a high turnover of staff. This has affected the stability of the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is variable across the school. Frequent changes in teaching staff disrupts pupils' learning. As a result, pupils do not make consistently strong progress across the curriculum.
- Attendance is below the national average. Leaders have put strategies in place to address this, but these have not yet had a positive impact.
- Staff morale is low. Many staff do not feel sufficiently supported by leaders to be able to meet their high expectations.
- Teaching is inconsistent in meeting the needs of pupils, including the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. At times there is low-level disruption in lessons when the work is not suitable for pupils' abilities.
- A lack of communication with parents and carers has left many feeling angry and frustrated. The school has opened lines of communication, but leaders know that more work is needed in this area.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have ensured that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils are happy and well cared for at school.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2017, pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, was above the national averages in reading and mathematics. Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above average.
- The good provision in early years gets children off to a positive start. They make strong progress and enjoy their learning.
- The interim headteacher and the leadership team have provided some stability for the school since October 2017 and the trust has been able to reduce its level of support. Leaders are committed to improving standards in the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - securing stable and consistent school leadership so that the school is able to develop without the current level of support from the trust
 - improving the rates of teacher retention
 - ensuring that staff receive the necessary support to secure their well-being and develop their professional skills effectively
 - ensuring that teaching meets the needs of all pupils so that they make consistently strong progress across the curriculum
 - ensuring that planning and provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are consistently strong across the school
 - continuing to improve communication with parents
 - ensuring that the strategies put in place to improve pupils' attendance are effective so that rates of absence reduce.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Frequent changes to leadership and management have led to some instability within the school. The trust has not been able to provide continuity of school leadership and has had significant involvement in the running of the school since it opened as an academy.
- Leaders are not focused enough on staff retention to secure consistency of teaching across the school. The school has had many staffing changes which have led to instability in teaching and learning. Parents have rightly expressed their anxiety at the high turnover of staff.
- Staff morale is a cause for concern. A large number of staff are unhappy at the lack of support they receive from senior leaders and do not feel valued. Leaders have high expectations of their staff but do not always pay enough attention to their well-being.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good across the school. Monitoring of teaching is thorough and leaders have a detailed picture of the strengths and weaknesses in this area. However, leaders cannot demonstrate the impact of staff development due to frequent changes in staffing.
- Leadership of SEN provision has been inconsistent and teaching staff are often responsible for organising additional support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in their class. This means that planning and provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not consistent across the school. The school has a small number of pupils with education, health and care plans; additional funding is used effectively to support the needs of these pupils.
- Many parents complain that leaders do not communicate effectively with them. The interim headteacher has improved relationships between the school and parents, but leaders acknowledge that there is still work to do in this area. The newly formed Longshaw Academy Friends for parents has begun to establish better links between staff and parents.
- Since the predecessor school's last inspection, leaders and managers have raised pupils' achievement at the end of key stages 1 and 2. In 2017, outcomes were strong for all pupils in Years 2 and 6, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Recently appointed middle leaders are starting to have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning. They have introduced new strategies, such as different approaches to teaching reading and mathematics across the school. Staff are positive about the changes they have made. However, it is too early to see the full impact of their work.
- Opportunities exist for staff to develop their leadership skills and share good practice by working with other schools in the trust. Some staff have become subject leaders within the trust, for example, and use their expertise to help other teachers plan and deliver lessons.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to provide interventions and activities that improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. For example, a 'nurture group' for key stage 1 pupils is successfully helping targeted pupils to develop their social skills through small-group activities at lunchtime. Although funding is used effectively, leaders acknowledge that tighter evaluation of its impact would help to target its use to provide the most appropriate support for individual pupils.
- The curriculum is broad and gives pupils opportunities to explore a range of subjects and themes. Leaders responsible for science have improved the curriculum and pupils particularly benefit from well-planned investigative work. Subjects such as history and geography are not taught in sufficient depth, however, and leaders have identified this as an area for development.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils show a good understanding of different cultures, particularly through their work in art, Spanish and music. Pupils know about British values and this is helping them to become respectful and tolerant of people from different backgrounds and religions. In all year groups, inspectors observed pupils working socially and collaboratively in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy many of the enrichment activities on offer at the end of the school day, such as computing and multi-sports, but said they would like more choice. Leaders use sports premium funding to support sports clubs and to provide resources such as external sports coaches. Pupils also attend a variety of sporting events and competitions, often across the trust's schools and in the local area.

Governance of the school

- The intention of the local governing body is to act as a 'critical friend' to the school leaders, but evidence suggests that it has not been fully effective in that role. The governing body has been in place, since the school opened in January 2016. Governors have focused on improving communication with parents and have a basic understanding of strengths and weaknesses across the school. Minutes of meetings indicate that governors do not challenge leaders with sufficient rigour.
- Senior leaders are accountable to the board of trustees, which oversees all aspects of the school's performance. Trustees meet their statutory duty to ensure that safeguarding is effective at the school. More broadly, however, the chair of the trust acknowledges that further work is needed to improve governance.
- There remains some confusion of roles between the local governing body and trustees. For example, neither has been effective in holding leaders to account for how additional funding is used to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have improved the safety of the school premises and tightened up security procedures for people entering and leaving the school. The procedures to ensure the suitability of staff meet requirements. Some aspects of record-keeping in relation to employee checks were remedied during the inspection.

- Staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. They understand and use the school's referral systems effectively if they have any concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders seek appropriate advice from external agencies and make sure that pupils and families receive the support they need.
- The curriculum gives pupils opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe and they know about online safety. They have benefited from local police guidance with regard to 'stranger danger' and road safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The school has had many staffing changes which have led to the inconsistent quality of teaching and learning across the school. Some classes have experienced several different teachers this academic year. This has caused upheaval as it takes time for teachers to get to know their pupils.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. While routines are established in some classes, for example 'three before me', pupils in other classes do not follow these routines well because their teachers are new and unaware of what is expected.
- The tasks pupils are given are sometimes too challenging for the least able pupils and they struggle to keep up. At other times, pupils complete the work quickly and are not moved on in their learning. This occasionally leads to low-level disruption as pupils are not fully engaged in the lesson.
- The challenge offered to the most able pupils across the school varies from class to class. However, pupils in upper key stage 2 are sufficiently stretched in lessons, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have recently taken action to improve the teaching of reading across the school and to help pupils develop a love of reading. Pupils enjoy reading but, here too, the level of challenge is variable.
- The school's assessment system tracks pupils' progress in detail and informs discussion between leaders and teachers on the progress of individual pupils. This enables them to identify where pupils are at risk of underachieving. However, a comparison of assessment information and work seen in pupils' books suggests that standards are not consistently applied and are sometimes generous.
- There are pockets of stronger teaching in the school. Teachers who know their pupils well plan lessons which motivate and engage all pupils. Inspectors saw evidence of teachers using effective questioning techniques to draw out pupils' understanding and encourage them to think deeply.
- Phonics teaching is strong. Staff use a range of strategies to practise and reinforce sounds, enabling children to make good progress in their reading.
- The environment both inside and outside of classrooms is bright and attractive. Displays reflect the work being done in classrooms and 'working walls' support pupils well in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe and are kept safe at school. Warm relationships exist between staff and pupils so that pupils feel confident about talking to staff if they have any concerns.
- Pupils are taught well to recognise different types of bullying. While incidents of bullying are rare, pupils can explain how teachers support them if they feel at risk. Pupils support each other, regardless of differences. As one pupil said, 'All pupils are equal at this school.'
- Key stage 2 pupils enjoy helping younger pupils through the 'buddy' support system. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibility and help the school, such as being a prefect or eco-warrior, or a member of the democratically elected school council.
- Pupils generally enjoy their learning. They work well with each other, sharing ideas and working collaboratively to improve their work and solve problems.
- The school makes sure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Year 6 pupils are taught about what to expect at secondary school and feel confident about their future school as a result.
- Presentation in pupils' books is variable. Most pupils take pride in their work but expectations for presentation are not consistent across all subjects and classes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Leaders' actions to improve attendance have had some impact, but attendance remains below the national average. The rate of persistent absence, particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, is showing little sign of improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally positive, but low-level disruption occurs in lessons when the work is not suited to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils 'switch off' when the work is too difficult, for example, or start to chat with each other while they wait for more challenging work.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and adults. They listen to their teachers and follow instructions promptly. Behaviour around the school is orderly and well-managed.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Current pupils are not making consistently good progress in a wide range of subjects. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. This is mainly due to the significant turnover of teaching staff. Where pupils have had different teachers or frequent supply staff since the start of the academic year, their progress over time is not as strong as that of pupils who have had greater stability.

- The school's assessment system does not give an accurate picture of current pupils' progress across the curriculum. Progress information does not always match up with the quality of work seen in pupils' books. This is particularly the case in subjects other than English and mathematics, where pupils do not develop their knowledge in sufficient depth.
- Current Year 6 pupils are making strong progress and are on track to do well in the upcoming national tests. This is a result of consistently effective teaching over time along with targeted 'booster' sessions and additional lessons.
- In 2017, Year 6 pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, was above average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. Pupils' attainment was also high. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made broadly average progress from their different starting points.
- In 2017, Year 2 pupils' attainment at the expected standard was above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth was below average in reading and mathematics, but above average in writing.
- Pupils can apply their phonics skills well to decode new words and develop their reading ability. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average in 2017.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have created safe and happy learning environments in Nursery and Reception. Consistently good-quality teaching and well-established routines ensure that children get off to a good start in their education.
- Both the indoors and outdoors provision have a variety of interesting and stimulating resources to support all areas of learning. Staff plan activities that are purposeful and engaging. For example, observing the newly hatched chicks in the classroom inspired tasks for children to describe the development of the chicks.
- Staff often direct children to particular activities that are suited to their needs, but children are also encouraged to be curious and independent learners. Children are happy to talk about their learning and ask pertinent questions.
- Children know what is expected of them and they behave well as a result. Occasionally there are disagreements, for example about sharing equipment, but children generally play well together.
- Leaders accurately assess children's starting points when they join the school. Children start in early years with knowledge and skills that are generally typical for their age. In 2017, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above the national average.
- Current performance information indicates that children are making strong progress. This is supported by observations of children's learning and work in books.
- Parents are positive about the early years provision. They feel involved in their children's education and enjoy the 'stay and play' opportunities. Parents agree that

their children are kept safe and are looked after well.

- The strong outcomes achieved at the end of Reception indicate that children enter Year 1 ready to learn and with the skills they need.

School details

Unique reference number	142461
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10051884

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Anna Layman
Executive headteacher	Patricia Davies
Interim headteacher	Chris Hotham
Telephone number	020 8529 5693
Website	www.longshawprimaryschool.com
Email address	school@longshaw.waltham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in January 2016 and is one of four schools in the Silver Birch Academy Trust.
- The school is an average-sized primary school. The early years provision comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes.
- The interim headteacher took up post in October 2017. Governance comprises a trust board, an executive leadership team and a local governing body. The chief executive officer is also the executive headteacher.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes in the school to observe teaching and learning across a range of subjects. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, teaching staff, leaders from the Silver Birch Academy Trust, the chair of the local advisory council, support staff and different groups of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the trust.
- The inspection team held formal and informal discussions with pupils during the inspection to hear their views of the school and to talk about their learning. Inspectors also listened to the reading of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors analysed documentation provided by the school, including the leaders' evaluation of the school, information about pupils' progress and attainment, safeguarding information, attendance information and behaviour records.
- The inspection team scrutinised pupils' books from a variety of subjects and year groups. They spoke with pupils about their work in lessons.
- The inspection team took account of 72 responses to Parent View and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection. The views of 35 staff were also considered through the questionnaires received.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Birtles	Ofsted Inspector
Rani Karim	Ofsted Inspector

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