

Langer Primary Academy

Langer Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 2HL

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not sustained good teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement has declined for all groups, including the most able, those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders and teachers do not have an accurate view of pupils' achievements. Assessment processes are unreliable, and some teachers are not sufficiently skilled in identifying pupils who are falling behind.
- Owing to a legacy of poor teaching, older pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Despite some indication of pupils catching up, poor attainment is still evident in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not deploy teaching assistants effectively. Too often, pupils do not get the support that they need to ensure that they are successful in their learning.
- Over time, leaders have not provided teachers with the training required for them to understand the demands of the curriculum, including for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers do not guide pupils sufficiently well in their learning. Pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work or how to challenge themselves to do well.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not consistently high enough. Pupils do not complete sufficient quality of work in writing and mathematics.
- Adults do not insist on the highest standards of work. Pupils' presentation of work in some year groups and subjects is poor.
- Some pupils do not engage in learning because their needs are not well catered for. This results in low-level disruption in lessons and slows the progress of some pupils in classes.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have correctly identified areas for development and have made some effective changes to teaching and learning.
- The majority of parents are very supportive of the school, its leaders and staff. They say that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Recent staff appointments and actions taken by leaders show some green shoots of improvement in teaching. Current teachers are beginning to address the gaps in pupils' learning.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' achievement by:
 - taking swift action to improve teaching through high-quality training and professional development
 - making sure that all teachers carefully plan tasks that meet the needs and abilities of pupils, particularly those who are most able
 - ensuring that pupils in need of additional help are given effective support by teachers and teaching assistants
 - ensuring that teachers give pupils appropriate guidance to show them what they need to do to improve their work
 - establishing consistently high expectations of the quality of written work
 - ensuring that teachers plan good, regular opportunities for pupils to practise their English and mathematical skills across the wider curriculum
 - providing the right support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make sure that they make rapid progress
 - maintaining consistently high expectations of behaviour in all lessons and swiftly identifying pupils who are off task.
- Raise standards in early years by ensuring that:
 - adults keep a close check on how well activities contribute to children's learning
 - teachers provide children with more good opportunities to develop their early writing skills
 - leaders gain a better understanding of children's needs prior to them starting school, so that appropriate learning is planned.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the school's assessment procedures provide an accurate view of what pupils know and can do
 - ensuring that teachers have a good understanding of the skills and knowledge for each age and stage of pupils' development in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that subject leaders support teachers in their subject knowledge so that they plan learning that is appropriate to the age and stage of pupils
 - quickly implementing an appropriate curriculum that effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
 - using funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities effectively to accelerate their progress.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, leaders had been slow to tackle weak teaching and inaccurate assessment. As a result, pupils have had poor teaching for some time and a significant proportion are underachieving across the school in all subjects.
- Assessment procedures have changed since the previous inspection. The executive headteacher has correctly identified that the systems to track the progress of pupils throughout the school lack rigour and accuracy. They give misleading information. Therefore, leaders do not have a consistent understanding of the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders agree that there are considerable inconsistencies between the school's own performance information, the quality of learning seen during the inspection, and the work in pupils' books over time. However, the deputy headteacher and subject leader for English have already put in place plans to ensure that the latest set of assessments are more accurate.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make very slow progress. Current leaders cannot account clearly for the use of additional funding for these pupils. Until very recently, when the new leader was appointed, there had been no checks to ensure that the support the school provided for this group of pupils was effective in raising their achievement. Plans are now in place and training for all staff has already taken place. However, it is too soon to see the effect of the actions taken.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding has not been effective. They have not robustly evaluated the use of previous expenditure and, where they have evidenced impact on pupils' achievement, the assessment is unreliable. This means that leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils across the school make the best possible progress they can.
- The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher have been quick to develop an accurate view of the school. They have identified the many areas for development. They have high aspirations for pupils and staff. They are committed to improving teaching and accelerating all pupils' progress. In the short time that they have been in post, they have already begun to improve the quality of teaching in each class, particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The majority of senior and middle leaders are new to their roles. They have, however, put in place clear plans to rapidly improve pupils' achievement, and the initial impact of those actions is beginning to be seen, although the measures have not had time to make a demonstrable difference in terms of pupils' achievement.
- Subject leaders have not received help to gain the skills that they need to carry out their roles effectively. They do not check the quality of teaching or pupils' progress well enough in their areas of responsibility and are unable to give an informed view of current pupils' achievement. They have not supported teachers sufficiently well to ensure that all teachers' subject knowledge enables pupils' progress.
- The executive headteacher correctly identified that the systems for managing teachers' performance were weak. These systems have been changed. They did not previously

help teachers to rapidly improve their practice and improve pupils' progress.

- Most parents spoken with about the school were positive, with comments such as, 'I think it is a good school. My son is happy and feels safe.' This was reflected in responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which parents completed. Effective relationships between the school and parents and carers are developing well, despite the school's recent turbulence. Parents say that their children are safe, well cared for and enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders rightly identified that the development of the curriculum for many subjects, including English and mathematics, is poor. Although pupils do benefit from a range of activities and enrichment opportunities, which undoubtedly broaden their experiences, there is little planned structure for the curriculum across the school. As a consequence, learning does not enable pupils to build on and develop the skills, knowledge and expertise that are expected for their age.
- Topic books reflect poor coverage of the national curriculum, and there is limited evidence of learning in subjects such as history, geography, science and a modern foreign language. Furthermore, the opportunities for pupils to practise their basic English and mathematical skills are very limited.
- The school's curriculum does not promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education sufficiently well. For example, leaders have not ensured that teachers plan a range of activities to develop the personal, social, health and emotional curriculum. There are pockets of innovative work across the school and with the local community which are beginning to develop these elements, such as the 'services day' that is planned for the whole school in the summer.
- The school promotes British values effectively. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils take part in elections for school councillors and learn to value and respect other people. As one pupil said, 'We are all different and it doesn't mean we shouldn't treat everyone the same.'
- Leaders use the additional primary school physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to employ an external coach to provide pupils with specialist teaching. However, little has been done to check how well and appropriately pupils' skills are developing. There is no clear plan in place to ensure that teachers are provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to make this strategy sustainable.

Governance of the school

- In September 2017, a new governing board replaced the existing local governing body.
- Members of the governing board and trust have not ensured that the school complies with statutory requirements. Reporting on the use of the additional funding provided by the pupil premium and the PE and sport premium is minimal. More importantly, its impact on pupils' outcomes is not well documented.
- The new governing board, which offers considerable experience and expertise, is committed to the school and to improving outcomes for pupils. Its members have supported leaders in ensuring that the school recruits staff who are able to rapidly improve pupils' outcomes. This support includes an experienced headteacher who is already working with the executive headteacher to secure a smooth transition to his

role from September.

- The trust provides more effective oversight of other aspects of the school's work, for example, its health and safety procedures. However, some aspects of the school's safer recruiting procedures and safeguarding arrangements are not as robustly checked as they could be.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- On arrival at the school in September, the executive headteacher reviewed all policies and procedures. She quickly identified gaps in administrative procedures and has acted with urgency to resolve the majority of these. Recent radical changes have been introduced to ensure that there are robust systems in place.
- Leaders are addressing the fact that some systems are still not as robust as they could be as the old and new system merge. Leaders and staff use the school's new online system to ensure that procedures are fit for purpose. As a result, pupils are safe. Leaders follow up any safeguarding concerns that they may have in a timely manner.
- Designated safeguarding leads understand the importance of their responsibilities. Although some very recently appointed staff have not yet had all of their updated training for safeguarding, this is due imminently and staff have some understanding of the school's procedures.
- The school uses a range of outside agencies as and when needed to support the needs of parents and families, especially those who are particularly vulnerable. For example, the family support worker liaises effectively with safeguarding leads in schools that pupils have either come from or may be going to. An off-site nurture group, counsellors and an educational welfare officer are used to good effect.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Weak teaching since the previous inspection throughout key stage 1 and early years has led to a significant number of children and pupils underachieving. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils have made slow progress. Pupils in key stage 2 are also significantly underachieving in a range of subjects.
- Teachers do not have a secure enough understanding of how to support the learning of key groups of pupils. They have not ensured that the tasks that they set build on pupils' prior attainment or stretch pupils in their learning.
- Current staff have little understanding of how assessment links to pupils' learning in a range of subjects because the assessment procedures are not currently fit for purpose.
- Teachers' expectations are often not high enough. This results in many pupils not making sufficient progress in their learning. Teachers do not make good use of teaching assistants to support pupils if they are struggling. Too much time is spent on learning that is not matched well to pupils' needs, and teachers do not move pupils on quickly enough in their learning, particularly the most able. As a result, pupils go off task and the work they produce is often of poor quality.
- Work evidenced in writing and mathematics books shows that pupils make little

progress over time, including pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Pupils do not routinely take care with their work. Teachers do not insist on pupils producing the best work they can. Inspectors and leaders could find little evidence of the school's agreed policy to provide pupils with opportunities to draft, edit or improve their work. Most of the work seen by inspectors, including that selected by leaders, was of a poor standard.

- Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their basic English and mathematical skills across the curriculum. There are occasions when individual teachers think carefully about how to bring skills together. For example, in one lesson seen in the computer suite, and following on from topic work on the Stone Age, pupils researched images of bows and arrows and designed an advert to promote their chosen weapon. There is little evidence of pupils using problem solving and reasoning in either class discussion or their written mathematics work. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length to develop their writing.
- Teachers do not routinely spot pupils' misconceptions or provide pupils with clear guidance on how they can improve their work. Too often, pupils repeat mistakes for some time without being corrected. Teachers accept work that is partly finished and poorly presented, often with incorrect spelling and punctuation, particularly in key stage 2. Pupils do not, therefore, show what they are capable of and do not readily challenge themselves to do better.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers are sufficiently skilled to teach all subjects in the national curriculum. As a consequence, learning is often poorly planned and does not reflect the appropriate standards required at each stage and age.
- Teachers are beginning to address the considerable gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills brought about by weak teaching. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this work. Pupils are also underachieving in subjects such as in geography, history and science.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. The family liaison worker is tenacious in following up any concerns and working well with individual pupils.
- Some pupils have poor attitudes to their work because, too often, the level of work set by teachers is too low. Pupils only complete the minimum amount expected of them. Pupils say that the work teachers set for them is often too easy. Pupils are not motivated to complete tasks well or do their best, and nor do they challenge themselves to achieve more.
- The school has clear procedures in place to teach pupils about the various forms that bullying can take. Pupils told inspectors that they know that staff will deal with any issues that arise, and that incidents of bullying have decreased and are now rare.

- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is underdeveloped throughout the curriculum. For example, teachers do not routinely identify opportunities to promote spiritual and cultural development. However, pupils show respect for their classmates and have a developing understanding of life styles other than their own.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Around the school and in the playground, pupils behave well. In lessons, particularly where teaching is not matched to pupils' needs, their behaviour interrupts the learning of others and slows the pace of learning.
- Teachers do not consistently and quickly address poor behaviour in lessons. Pupils are unclear, as are some teachers, as to the school's system for rewarding good behaviour and what sanctions are in place if pupils behave poorly.
- The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and they enjoy coming to school. The school has very clear procedures in place to follow up on pupils who are not in school for whatever reason. Leaders are tenacious in pursuing contact with parents. Inroads are being made to address the minority of pupils whose attendance is not as good as it should be.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes are inadequate because pupils are not making sufficient progress during their time at the school. Teachers do not plan work to meet the needs of significant groups of pupils.
- In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of their time in Reception was below average and had declined since the previous inspection.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. This was a decline from 2016. Not enough pupils achieved the higher standard in 2017, particularly in mathematics. This mirrors the position in 2016.
- Pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6 in 2017 were above the national average and were an improvement on those in 2016. However, despite good-quality provision in Year 6 recently, weaker progress in other year groups and the standard seen in pupils' books show that pupils are currently underachieving across key stage 2.
- The school's own assessments are unrealistically positive and do not reflect the work seen in pupils' books. Owing to a legacy of poor teaching, leaders acknowledge that there are considerable gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Current teachers, many of whom are new to the school, are working hard to accelerate pupils' progress. Progress in English, mathematics and topic work is very slow.
- Pupils are articulate and keen to learn, but they told inspectors that their work is often too easy, particularly in mathematics and writing. The most able pupils are not routinely challenged to achieve their best. As a result, the vast majority of most-able

pupils currently in the school do not achieve their potential, including those who are disadvantaged.

- The rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils currently are similar to those made by their classmates and are too slow. Although some provision is in place to ensure that vulnerable pupils are better prepared for learning, for example, through the nurture group, pupils are not well catered for within the classroom.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is very slow. They do not receive the support they need to be successful learners. Their individual needs are not well enough identified. As a result, teaching assistants are not able to provide appropriate support. Although a plan is now in place to urgently address this important area of the school's work, it has not yet had an impact on pupils' outcomes.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development since the previous inspection has declined to below the national average.
- A large proportion of children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language, and in fine motor skills. Leaders have ensured that the provision gives these children an inviting, language-rich learning environment. Children readily talk about their learning. For example, children examined various fruits and vegetables which had been cut open to show the seeds. One child told inspectors, 'I don't like to eat the seeds, but you can make flowers out of them when you dig up the garden and put seeds in.'
- Children's progress this year is improving. Importantly, the progress that individual children make is well charted. However, the most able children are not supported as well as they might be to move them on in their learning.
- Leaders have a good understanding of what they expect children to learn from a wide range of activities they offer. Teachers encourage children to spend time at an activity rather than just flitting from one to another. However, there is still a tendency for some children, particularly boys, to drift from activity to activity without a clear focus on what they are intended to learn.
- Adults provide good support to individual children and groups of children. During the inspection, children were seen using practical equipment to make number sentences on their whiteboards. The teacher skilfully prompted one child to look carefully at what she was writing, saying, 'Can you see a pattern in your numbers?' A discussion then took place between the teacher and child about what number might come next in her adding up.
- Leaders deploy adults well to support the range of activities both inside and outside the classroom. All adults use ongoing questioning and conversation skills to promote the use of language and to extend children's vocabulary.
- The teaching of phonics in the Reception class is improving. Children use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read and write simple words, but their opportunities to do this are limited.
- Children behave very well and respond well to 'magnet eyes' when the teacher wants

their attention. Children are sociable and play well together, as well as on their own. Staff are good role models. Class routines support children well to be kind, to share and to listen to each other.

- Leaders acknowledge that working with parents and pre-school settings is something that has not been well developed. Much has been done recently to address this, including transition afternoons for parents and planned visits to pre-schools and settings.
- Children settle well, with some joining the school throughout the academic year. Parents are happy with the way that the school uses its online system for recording children's achievements, and they are beginning to contribute to the records.
- The school's systems to keep children safe are effective. However, inspectors found that some of the outside resources are tired and not in good repair. The Reception class meets all welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	138117
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10053688

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John King
Executive Headteacher	Christine Kemp-Hall
Telephone number	01394 283065
Website	www.langerprimaryacademy.org
Email address	admin@langerprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	19–20 January 2016

Information about this school

- Langer Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is sponsored and supported by the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The executive headteacher has been employed by the school on a part-time basis since September 2017. She leaves her position in August 2018 and an experienced headteacher has been appointed to take up the role of full-time headteacher from September 2018.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has recently appointed a new deputy headteacher and leaders of special educational needs, English and mathematics respectively. The vast majority of teachers are new to the school, some as recent as April 2018. The majority of classes, therefore, have been affected by staff changes over the last two academic years.
- The structure of governance within the trust has changed since the previous inspection. The local governing body was disbanded in September 2017 and a

governing board was put in place.

- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from a variety of ethnic minority groups is above the national average, as is the proportion who enter the school with English as an additional language.
- Following a period when it was necessary to split Year 1 pupils between the Reception and Year 2 classes, all year groups are now taught separately.
- The school runs its own breakfast club on site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
- Inspectors observed learning in all classes throughout the school, looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to them about their learning. A number of the visits to classes were made jointly with the executive headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders for English and mathematics, the school business manager, the school's family support officer and the leader for special educational needs.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing board and the trust's new safeguarding lead, as well as a group of 12 pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' books in English, mathematics and topic work. The lead inspector also looked at the school's assessment information.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1 and 5 and spoke to pupils about reading in lessons.
- The inspection team spoke with parents at the beginning of the day about their views of the school. The lead inspector also took into consideration the views of 48 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspection team looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its improvement plans, a range of school policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing board. The lead inspector also scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Ruth Brock, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kim Hall	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Hughes	Ofsted Inspector

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M1 2WD

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