

Long Bennington Church of England Academy

Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5EH

Inspection dates

12 to 13 February 2019

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Following the previous inspection, standards and progress declined. However, new leaders have improved the quality of the curriculum. They have ensured that there is a consistent approach to teaching and learning. Standards have risen.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have accurate assessments of what pupils already know. Pupils' progress is improving throughout the school. However, not all of the most able pupils make as much progress as they could.
- Senior leaders have established clear roles within a new leadership structure. Some subject leaders are in the early stages of developing the skills that they need to further improve their area of responsibility.
- Governors work alongside school leaders to check the progress that pupils are making. Governors hold leaders to account with rigour.
- Teachers provide effective feedback for pupils in mathematics. They spot when pupils do not understand something. Misconceptions are quickly addressed.
- Pupils make strong progress in reading. They read fluently and with interest in the text that they have chosen.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to write in a range of different styles and for a variety of purposes. However, not all pupils use their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar consistently well in all their written work.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils make strong progress.
- Pupils care for each other and for their school. Older pupils relish positions of responsibility such as supporting the younger pupils at lunchtimes.
- Children in early years become independent learners. Staff know the children well and opportunities for learning are built on the children's interests.
- The curriculum is vibrant and rich. Pupils study a wide range of exciting topics which enthuse them with a love of learning.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have many opportunities to learn about Britain as a diverse society. Pupils have a strong understanding of fairness and equality.
- Pupils feel safe. They understand how to keep themselves safe online. Older pupils are well prepared for the transition to secondary school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes further so that a greater proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard in mathematics and writing by the end of key stage 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that pupils apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar consistently well in all their written work.
- Develop the roles of all subject leaders so that they can evaluate and further improve the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, standards declined. Some pupils, particularly the most able, did not make the progress that they should. In recent years, there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school. A new headteacher, assistant headteachers and governors have been appointed. They have built a strong leadership team who have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to improve further.
- Following her appointment, the headteacher and her leadership team rigorously examined the quality of teaching in the school. They have brought about improvements in teachers' subject knowledge and practice. They have raised expectations of what all pupils, including the most able, can achieve. Senior leaders have monitored the quality of teaching regularly and checked to see that their feedback was being acted on.
- Leaders have provided training so that teachers' assessments are precise and provide pupils with effective next steps for learning. Leaders have established effective moderation with other schools and external agencies to ensure that assessment is rigorous and accurate.
- Leaders have established effective performance management. Staff know the priorities for school improvement. They can explain how they are held to account for improving the work of the school. Staff appreciate the opportunities that they have had for further training and can explain how this has helped them to do their jobs better.
- Leaders swiftly identify barriers to learning for pupils with SEND. Leaders have built highly effective working partnerships with external agencies to ensure that teachers know how best to support pupils' different needs. Parents who spoke with inspectors praised the school's approach and the impact that this has had on the progress that their children were making.
- Leaders make careful use of assessment information and pupils' views, so that pupil premium funding is used effectively. Leaders have ensured that funding is also used to provide well-targeted support to consolidate pupils' learning. It is also used to provide additional challenge so that pupils can deepen their understanding. Leaders check the impact regularly to ensure that the support is improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have enhanced the broad and balanced curriculum so that it clearly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. First-hand experiences, such as visiting a mosque, enhance pupils' understanding of diversity in modern Britain. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong, underpinned by their golden rules and the values that these are based on. Leaders include 'education for diversity and inclusion' in the school curriculum. Marking Holocaust Memorial Day and Black History Week has enabled pupils to understand why it is so important that everyone is treated equally.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum covers the contribution of women to a wide variety of subjects such as history and art. They encourage pupils to think about future careers

by inviting parents to discuss their roles with the pupils during science week.

- Parents are supportive of the leadership of the school. Those parents who spoke with inspectors praised the approachability of leaders and the support that leaders gave to families. Leaders have listened to the opinions of parents expressed in school surveys. They have adapted the school curriculum, such as by changing modern foreign language teaching to improve transition to secondary school.
- Leaders use the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium effectively to further improve rates of participation. They have evaluated pupils' fitness to check that this has improved over time. Additional support for less engaged pupils has improved their enjoyment and fitness and provided them with the skills to help others become more active. Pupils have the opportunity to join in a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as rugby and cheerleading. They enjoy the new 'Active Playtimes' and can explain how this helps to keep them fit.
- Subject leaders are keen to improve their subjects. They have written action plans and driven improvements throughout the school, for example in improving the teaching of handwriting and fluency in mathematics. Subject leaders regularly check the quality of work in books and offer support to other teachers through feedback. However, they do not yet check the impact of these recommendations or monitor the progress of different groups of pupils in their subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors in the school have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They meet with leaders regularly to monitor the progress that pupils are making. They work with school leaders to check that this assessment is securely based on scrutiny of pupils' work. They have ensured that systems are in place to hold teachers to account for the progress of their pupils.
- Governors challenge school leaders to ensure that the curriculum prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. They have checked to see whether the curriculum challenges stereotypes and provides the right support for boys and girls to be well supported in their learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have made sure that all staff have received appropriate and up-to-date training. Staff understand the school systems for recording concerns. Leaders make appropriate and timely referrals and are persistent in contacting agencies when they do not feel that an appropriate response has been received.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. They understand how to keep themselves safe when using phones and computers. They know that they should not arrange to meet someone that they have only spoken with through the internet. They know how to keep themselves safe on the bus. The school has a well-planned programme to educate older pupils about personal safety before they move to secondary school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their subject knowledge well in the teaching of phonics. Pupils build on the knowledge of sounds that they already have. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well as they begin to write sentences independently. Pupils can segment words effectively and blend the sounds together well in their reading.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics across the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They demonstrate effective modelling and use succinct explanations to help pupils to understand what is being taught. Teachers address misconceptions during lessons so that no learning time is lost. Teachers spot when pupils have grasped a concept and challenge them to develop their fluency further. Opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning are becoming embedded and increased challenge is becoming more evident for the most able.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Teachers choose appropriate and challenging texts to pique pupils' interest. Younger readers know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and use a glossary without prompting to look up the meaning of unfamiliar words. They read with expression and use their own experiences to help them to understand the content. Older pupils actively pursue individual interests in subjects or preferences for an author. They can explain the humour in the texts that they have chosen.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to read across the curriculum. This underpins the knowledge that pupils gain in different subjects such as history. For example, older pupils use their understanding of the events of World War Two when explaining the events in Anne Frank's diary. Teachers identify when pupils do not gain skills such as inferencing as quickly as they gain other skills, and teachers provide effective support.
- Teachers design sequences of lessons well so that pupils understand the purpose of writing and can shape their writing for the audience who will read it. For example, younger pupils wrote letters to family members and were delighted to receive replies.
- Teachers encourage their pupils to write with flair and many pupils make exciting vocabulary choices and organise their sentences well for effect. Older pupils wrote letters containing descriptive accounts from the trenches which drew on their historical knowledge. However, teachers do not consistently expect all pupils to apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar in all their written work.
- Teachers generally use assessment information well. However, there are some occasions when tasks in mathematics and writing do not build on what the most able pupils already know.
- Teaching in science provides pupils with the opportunity to work cooperatively and explain their ideas. Pupils respond well and display positive attitudes towards their learning. For example, they are keen to share their prior knowledge about the properties of materials when they discuss how they can keep ice frozen for longer. Insightful questioning from teachers probes their understanding and helps them to develop their knowledge of scientific processes.
- Teachers have planned a broad and balanced curriculum which prepares pupils well for their next stages in learning. Pupils respond well to the challenges that their teachers

set them. For example, during a French lesson, pupils were keen to practise their accents and discuss which was the correct preposition to use and why this was the case.

- Teachers set homework which provides pupils with opportunities to consolidate basic skills. Pupils understand that this is important and feel that this prepares them well for secondary 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 have identified the need to develop pupils' confidence and resilience. Well-planned, whole-school activities have helped pupils to become aware of their own strengths as well as recognising when they find things more difficult. Staff provide support for pupils who are less confident. Activities at lunchtime, such as cooking and craft, help them to develop different skills and build new friendships. Leaders have evaluated the impact this has had on pupils' feelings. Comments such as, 'I feel happier to put my hand up now,' were typical of the responses in the school's survey.
- Pupils say that everyone is accepted in their school. Year 6 'buddies' welcome the youngest pupils on transition days and this support continues throughout the year. They eat lunch together and share special occasions and weekly 'buddy time'. Older pupils develop a highly responsible attitude, and younger pupils settle well and feel part of the wider school community.
- Pupils understand that bullying is persistent and targeted unkindness. They feel that it occurs rarely and know who they would turn to for support. They feel that staff would deal with any unkindness straight away and would later check that it had not happened again. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and visits to 'The Warning Zone' provide pupils with opportunities to discuss dangers around them.
- Pupils have many opportunities to help others in the school. Digital ambassadors assist pupils who are using the school computers and make sure that they know how to keep safe. Head gardeners explain how their work ensures that the school remains attractive through the plants that they grow. Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the contribution that they all make to it.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils care for the school and for each other. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They play happily together on the playground and cooperate well. Pupils listen well in class and support each other in their learning. They are motivated, enthusiastic learners.
- Attendance at the school dipped during 2018. Leaders identified this and have acted swiftly to address this. They have ensured that all parents understand that they need to send their children to school every day. Leaders have also provided support for

parents where needed and monitored the impact of this. As a result, attendance has quickly improved and is now above the national average. Persistent absence has declined and is now well below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Attainment across the school is strong. The proportion of pupils who attain the expected standard and the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 is consistently above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 has increased over the past two years and is now consistently above national averages.
- The work in pupils' books shows that most current pupils make strong progress in writing and mathematics across the school. However, some of the most able pupils do not yet make enough progress in key stage two.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of current pupils' books and the school's assessment information indicates that disadvantaged pupils progress well. Evaluations of the outcomes of additional support shows that the gap is closing between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Scrutiny of the school's assessment information and pupils' workbooks shows that the progress of current pupils with SEND is strong. Pupils with education health care plans are making appropriate steps towards their targets.
- Scrutiny of science books shows that pupils' scientific thinking is well developed. Younger pupils develop the ability to investigate variables and explain their findings. Older pupils design experiments to investigate air-resistance and streamlined shapes, testing hypotheses.
- Pupils make strong progress in a wide variety of subjects. For example, in geography, younger pupils learn to use an atlas to find the location of volcanoes. Older pupils map tectonic plates and explain why volcanoes are found in some locations and not others. In religious education, younger pupils learn key information about Islam. Older pupils can use their knowledge of Islam as well as their skills in reasoning to explain which they think is the most important pillar in Islam and why.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the early years setting. Their self-evaluation is accurate, and they are ambitious to improve further. They have developed the shared classroom base and the outdoor area to provide a stimulating and rich environment for learning which builds on children's interests.
- Assessment of children's starting points is rigorous. Teachers use this information well to plan activities so that children can build on what they know in an enjoyable way. Children use what they have learned in their play. For example, children learn the correct way to hold a pencil and staff teach correct basic letter formation. Children use these skills when they are playing outside. They choose to write letters to fairies and hide them for the fairies to find. They use their knowledge of phonics and simple

irregular words to help them spell, and many are beginning to write in simple sentences independently.

- Children become enthusiastic and independent learners. They cooperate well together to fetch and carry water to make their dinosaur trail. They extend their imaginary play to discover dinosaur bones and explain how they have identified these. They concentrate for extended periods of time.
- Teachers quickly identify where children need additional support. They work well with families and other agencies to ensure that pupils' communication skills are secure. Pupils receive regular support so that they can catch up with their peers. Funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well to secure key skills such as phonics. By the end of the Reception Year the gap between them and their peers is closing.
- Parents are appreciative of the strong systems of communication. They find out what their children achieve through 'Marvellous Me' notes. The information that parents tell the staff is included in learning journeys. Parents feel that their children develop positive attitudes, both to learning and becoming part of the family of the school.
- Children with SEND are supported well. The school has worked well with external agencies to provide skilful use of specialist equipment and appropriate activities so that pupils gain communication skills.
- Teachers know the children well. Staff communicate effectively and have high expectations of what the children can achieve. They monitor pupils' development closely. The proportion of pupils who achieved a good level of development increased in 2018 and is now slightly above the national average. Children secure important skills and are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	138057
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10086763

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	264
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Liz Brady
Headteacher	Rebecca King
Telephone number	01400 281 353
Website	www.longbenningtonacademy.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@longbenningtonacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 to 21 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in a mixture of single-age and mixed-age classes. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average.
- The current headteacher took up her position in September 2015. A new leadership structure is in place. Many of the governors have taken up their positions since the last inspection, and the Chair of Governors took up her position in September 2018.
- The school became an academy in April 2012 as a stand-alone converter academy. The trustees have overall responsibility for governance in the school. The board of trustees delegates some of its functions to the governing body. The chair of the board of trustees is also the chair of the governing body.

- The school is a Church of England voluntary academy. It underwent a denominational inspection under section 48 during May 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work from all year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and middle leaders. They also met with four governors and spoke to a school adviser from Lincoln Diocese Board of Education.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, subject action plans, school policies, records about behaviour and safeguarding, attendance reports and records of moderation undertaken by the local authority and with other schools.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They took account of responses to the school's survey of opinions.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the beginning of both days and took account of the responses to the school's survey of parental opinions.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Carter	Senior Her Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector

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