

Linden Primary School

Headland Road, Evington, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 6AD

Inspection dates

11–12 June 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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have improved the quality of education throughout the school. Attainment has risen, and progress continues to improve. Outcomes are now good.
- Professional development has been used effectively. Middle leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and teachers' subject knowledge has improved.
- The teaching of early reading is a strength of the school. Pupils make strong gains in phonics. Older pupils become fluent readers with secure comprehension skills.
- Teachers' questioning develops pupils' mathematical understanding and enables pupils to explain their thinking.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. Attainment for this group of pupils is increasing.
- Leaders track the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) carefully. Their learning is well supported so that they make progress towards reaching their potential.
- Leaders have evaluated the impact of additional funding well. They have made well-judged changes that have enabled more pupils to participate in extra-curricular sport.
- Teachers ensure that pupils can use the skills that they have gained for a purpose. Pupils write at length across a variety of subjects. However, not all pupils present their work as well as they could.
- Pupils edit and improve their work. However, teachers do not consistently address misconceptions in pupils' work. Some pupils continue to make the same errors.
- Leaders have enriched the quality of education for the children in early years. Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. Children are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe online. Leaders have ensured that all statutory checks are in place and that training fits the context of the school. Some training is evaluated in more depth than others.
- Pupils behave well. They say that bullying is rare. However, not all parents fully understand how the school resolves instances of poor behaviour.
- Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They become tolerant individuals, well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - all teachers consistently address pupils' misconceptions
 - all pupils present their work in a fluent and well-formed style.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are fully informed about the school's work on anti-bullying.
- Ensure that the evaluation of the impact of safeguarding training is consistently rigorous.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have worked systematically and thoroughly to improve the quality of education at the school. They have made effective use of the support from the local authority and other advisers to check that the changes that they have made have improved the quality of teaching and learning for all.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school is detailed and based on a range of evidence. Thorough checks are made to ensure that this is accurate. Leaders use this information to make well-judged strategic decisions to improve the school further.
- Leaders have made highly effective use of staff training to develop a learning community. Middle and subject leaders have received well-focused support to develop their expertise. They have developed their subject knowledge and leadership skills and have used this to establish a consistent approach to teaching and learning. They have made regular checks to evaluate the new approaches and refined these where needed.
- Leaders have provided high-quality professional development to improve teachers' subject knowledge. This has led to a more consistent approach to teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers have appreciated the opportunity to develop their subject knowledge and feel well supported.
- Appropriate training has ensured that middle leaders fully understand their roles and responsibilities. There is a clear system of accountability in place to check that all pupils are making progress and that action is swiftly taken where this begins to dip. There has been a clear emphasis on building a learning community.
- Leaders use additional funding well. They evaluate the use of funding to check that it is making a difference. Leaders track the progress of disadvantaged pupils carefully and provide appropriate support to challenge pupils. For example, writing groups develop pupils' vocabulary and help them to improve the quality of the work that they produce.
- Leaders check the difference that the primary physical education and sports funding is making to pupils' fitness. They identify pupils who do not take part in as much sport and speak with them to find out how they could become more involved. Leaders adapt the opportunities on offer to increase pupils' participation, for example through providing more clubs at lunchtime or before school. This has enabled more pupils to benefit from regular sporting activity.
- Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified. They check to see that the support that they receive is making a difference. Careful planning and strong communication ensured that all adults know what pupils are learning next. Leaders work well with parents and other agencies.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a broad and balanced curriculum which develops pupils' knowledge of the world around them. They have ensured that pupils make progress in science, for example, enhanced by their access to the environment and 'forest schools'.
- Leaders consistently promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of British values. They ensure that pupils learn about democracy and the choices that they can make as

individuals. Pupils discuss and debate ideas in class and the school council represents these views to leaders. This has led to changes, such as the development of book areas in classrooms, in response to pupils' representations.

- The enrichment of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils meet representatives from a range of faiths. They learn about the values that are important to them, for example through explaining what the Parable of the Good Samaritan told Christians about God. All pupils take part in assemblies that explore the meaning of religious festivals such as Eid and Chinese New Year and visit a range of places of worship such as a gurdwara and a mosque. Pupils learn about a range of art techniques and develop their knowledge by visiting contrasting localities. Pupils develop a keen sense of what is right and wrong and can explain that through listening to each other's point of view they can live happily together.

Governance of the school

- Governors have an accurate knowledge of what has improved in the school. This is based on their work with leaders checking the impact of training and development on the standards that pupils reach. Governors make pertinent suggestions about how leaders' monitoring and evaluation could be further improved and hold leaders to account for the progress that pupils make. Governors ensure that appropriate safeguarding checks are made during the recruitment process. They are developing more effective ways of working with parents so that it is clearer how concerns can be raised.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all appropriate checks are in place before adults start to work with pupils at the school. They have provided training for all staff including ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities set out in the 'Prevent' duty guidelines. However, leaders have not evaluated the impact of all training in as much depth as they have about 'Prevent' training, for example. Leaders have ensured that concerns about pupils are referred to appropriate external agencies. They have helped parents to find additional support where necessary.
- Children feel safe in school and know how adults in school work to keep them safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They have a good knowledge about what to do if they feel that anyone is being unkind to them, including over the internet or through text messages. They can explain what they have learned from visitors to the school, for example about fire safety. Pupils learn about road safety and how they can help their younger siblings to stay safe, too.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved and is now good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They use assessment information well to ensure that the work that they plan matches pupils' next steps for learning.

- Pupils who may be falling behind are quickly identified by their teachers. They ensure that pupils can consolidate their learning either in class time or through additional opportunities for learning. Teachers communicate well with staff who provide additional support. These staff also have strong subject knowledge and provide effective teaching to help pupils catch up.
- Teachers model the pure sounds well. Their teaching is well focused on developing pupils' understanding and pupils make strong progress. Teachers also enable early readers to develop their understanding of the punctuation that they find in the texts, such as exclamation marks and question marks. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils develop their fluency in mathematics because teachers encourage them to be able to quickly recall multiplication facts. Teachers use questioning to deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers model using mathematics language with precision. They also develop pupils' ability to explain their thinking, for example through challenging the teacher's deliberate errors.
- Teachers have ensured that pupils have access to high-quality texts which are appealing and connected with the wider learning in the classroom. Teachers ask a range of questions to check on pupils' understanding. Pupils read frequently to develop an interest in a wide range of authors and genres.
- Pupils' understanding of sentence structures is skilfully developed by their teachers, so that their writing becomes richer. Teachers organise this so that pupils can use their new skills, for example, to punctuate direct speech so that they can add this to a narrative.
- Teachers ensure that pupils develop their writing skills by using them to write in a variety of subjects. For example, younger pupils write explanations of geographical terms for a glossary. Older pupils explain what happens when a volcano erupts using correct scientific vocabulary. However, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the way in which pupils present their work and this detracts from the quality of some writing.
- Pupils have opportunities to improve their work. They are encouraged to make more sophisticated choices of vocabulary and some pupils choose different sentence lengths for effect. However, teachers do not address all their misconceptions. As a result, some pupils continue to make the same mistakes in basic punctuation in the improved piece of work.
- Adults' subject specialisms are used effectively so that pupils can develop skills and knowledge. For example, adults modelled greetings in French effectively, which enabled pupils to improve their pronunciation as they greeted each other enthusiastically. Pupils were encouraged to work with care and precision in art as they developed their knowledge of and ability to use a range of media to represent sunflowers.
- Parents that inspectors spoke with felt that they knew what pupils were learning and how they could help their children. Pupils value their homework and feel that it helps to prepare them well for the next stage in their education. Some homework tasks are highly creative and are displayed with pride around the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils use the 'Linden Learning Powers' to become effective learners and responsible citizens. They are keen to do well. Pupils generally demonstrate resilience in their learning and are happy to learn from their mistakes. They have opportunities to demonstrate care for the world around them through visiting senior citizens' homes and looking after the environment around them.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on positions of responsibility. They apply to run a wide variety of clubs at lunchtimes. Pupils who are sports leaders organise competitions within the school and then report back on the outcomes to the wider school community.
- Pupils learn how to lead healthy lives. They understand the importance of eating a variety of foods and exercising regularly. Pupils' fitness and stamina have improved through the running clubs which the school has organised and the introduction of the 'daily mile' which has led to some pupils becoming more involved in sports such as cross country.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. Teachers deliver regular anti-bullying lessons and pupils say that they know who they can speak to if someone was repeatedly upsetting them. The school's monitoring of incidents indicates that they are uncommon and dealt with appropriately. Leaders check to make sure that they do not reoccur. Parents that inspectors spoke with felt that their children were safe in school and that they could raise any concerns with members of staff. However, a very small minority of parents do not know how issues of bullying were resolved.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school building. They are courteous and polite. Pupils concentrate well in class and are eager to please. Most are keen to improve their work and do as well as they can.
- Leaders monitor behaviour carefully and analyse this for patterns to see how further improvements can be made. Governors help leaders to evaluate this and check that improvements are being made. For example, an increase in organised games at lunchtime has led to a decrease in boisterous play.
- Leaders have ensured that parents understand that their children need to be in school every day. They make thorough checks on absence and offer support to help parents who find it hard to get their children to school on time. Leaders also work with external agencies where the attendance of a pupil does not improve. Overall attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average. Persistent absence has declined and groups are not disadvantaged by non-attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' attainment has risen at the end of key stage 2. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the standard required of the phonics screening check in 2018 was above the national average. Current pupils are making strong progress and can apply this knowledge consistently well in their reading and writing.
- Older pupils read a wide range of appropriate and challenging texts. They develop strong comprehension skills and can give reasons which underpin their inferences from texts.
- Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and observations of lessons indicate that pupils make strong progress in mathematics, including the most able. They are becoming fluent mathematicians and are increasingly able to explain their thinking.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved. The wide range of writing in current pupils' workbooks indicates that current pupils have made strong progress. However, some pupils do not present their written work as well as they could. Some continue to make errors in punctuation and spelling which have prevented them from making as much progress as they could.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. Additional support enables them to develop their fluency in mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress in vocabulary and their knowledge of grammar. This helps them to make strong progress in reading and writing.
- The school's own assessment information and evidence from pupils' work indicates that pupils with SEND make strong progress. This is carefully tracked. Staff adapt pupils' targets once they have met them to make sure that pupils continue to make progress.
- Pupils make strong progress in religious education. They learn about different religions and visit several places of worship throughout their time in school. Younger pupils learn about the story of Rama and Sita. Older pupils compare different views of the world, including Humanism.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders in early years have made substantial improvements to the quality of education for the youngest children. They have raised teachers' expectations of what children can do and the progress that they can make. Leaders have a clear understanding of the skills that children need to acquire and have ensured that teaching is well matched to this. Leaders' strong promotion of equality and insightful planning has led to both boys and girls now attaining equally well.
- Leaders have ensured that the outdoor area and the school environment support children's learning. They are well used to enhance active learning. For example, adults take children on an imaginative 'bear hunt' and to promote their physical development.

- Pupils quickly acquire an understanding of the sounds that letters make. Children use this knowledge to write a persuasive leaflet about why tourists should visit Leicester. Teachers ensure that tasks challenge children and enable them to build on the strong prior learning that has taken place.
- Teachers make effective links with children's interest. Teachers talked to children to find out what their hobbies were. Careful planning connected the children's experience of swimming to explorations of floating and sinking. Teachers use questioning effectively to develop children's vocabulary and to help them to explain more clearly what they can see and are discovering.
- Adults quickly identify the additional needs that some children have. They work closely with parents and external agencies. Teachers ensure that parents are fully aware of the support that is being put in place and the role that they can play. Parents that inspectors spoke with praised the help and advice that they had received.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in early years. Leaders track their progress carefully and ensure that additional support is well-tailored to their needs, for example through developing children's speech. They check to see that it is making a difference.
- Children concentrate well on their learning. They cooperate well and enjoy learning together. Teachers have made sure that parents understand what they can do to help their children to consolidate their learning at home. Parents that inspectors spoke with felt that adults were approachable and happy to answer any questions that they might have.
- Outcomes have risen in early years as children get off to a strong start in learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. They become independent and resourceful learners who are well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	120068
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10087351

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Salma Limbada
Headteacher	Zaheer Mohamed
Telephone number	0116 2738435
Website	www.linden.leicester.sch.uk
Email address	office@linden.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. They scrutinised pupils' work, including records of children's learning in early years.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and middle leaders. An inspector also met with five governors and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents including the school development plan, subject action plans, school policies, records about behaviour and safeguarding and attendance reports.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They spoke with groups of pupils formally, and informally with pupils during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the beginning of the day and took account of the 20 opinions expressed on Parent View. They considered the school's own questionnaire of parental opinions. They spoke with groups of staff.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Stylianides	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	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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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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