

Inspection of Liberty Woodland School

Mayfield, Old Malden Lane, Worcester Park KT4 7PU

Inspection dates: 10–12 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They say that they like the various activities on offer, such as building dens.

Pupils told us that they feel safe and are happy at school. Pupils understand the key rules in place and how they help them to keep safe. For example, they know the importance of being in sight of an adult, particularly as almost all their learning experiences take place outdoors. Pupils know to keep within the rainbow ribbons, which tell them where to be.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are confident that adults will listen to their worries and address any of their concerns. They have trust in their teachers to swiftly deal with any form of bullying.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and have identified areas that need improvement. There is more work to do to improve the quality of learning in some subjects, such as mathematics and reading. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve are not sufficiently high.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, has ensured that pupils learn a range of subjects, as defined in the independent school standards.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is project-based for pupils throughout the school, including in the early years. This term, pupils are involved in the 'Culinary World' project. In this project, pupils learn aspects of geography as well as design technology. For example, they learn about the food eaten in different countries. However, older pupils from Year 2 to Year 4 do not develop secure knowledge or a deep understanding in geography and in other subjects that are taught through projects. They do not learn more and remember more over time.

In mathematics, leaders have mapped out clearly what knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and in what order. Leaders' plans for mathematics match the aims of the national curriculum. From the early years on, pupils have opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in number. Pupils we spoke with were able to remember some of their previous learning. However, they do not get enough chances to apply their mathematical knowledge to problem-solving. Opportunities for pupils to develop strong reasoning skills in mathematics are also limited.

Leaders have put a phonics programme in place that is taught in Reception and Year 1. Teachers and leaders use their checks on pupils well to swiftly identify and put into practice any support that individual pupils need. Sometimes reading books are not as well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge as they could be. This is

particularly the case for those who need the most help with their reading. Nonetheless, we saw children and pupils making good attempts at using phonics to read and write new words.

Staff manage pupils' behaviour positively and well. They help pupils to understand and manage their feelings. During lessons, pupils listen to their teachers well. Time is not wasted by any poor behaviour.

Leaders have developed an effective programme for personal, social and emotional development. Pupils learn how to be good citizens. They find out about values such as democracy and respect. For example, we saw pupils learning about respect. At the end of the day, pupils enjoyed sharing examples of how their friends had shown respect to others.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to broaden their horizons beyond the school. Pupils told us about the educational visits, dance, yoga and multi-sports activities they undertake in the afternoons. Pupils contribute to the local community in various ways. For example, pupils were given an opportunity to learn about how to preserve nature in the local community. They made and sold their artwork to raise funds for this cause.

Although the weaknesses identified in subjects also affect pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), these pupils are well supported. Leaders and staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to understand and cater for pupils' individual needs.

The governing body has been formed recently. It is too early to see the impact of governors' work, particularly on the quality of education provided.

Staff who responded to Ofsted's survey said they are proud to work at the school. They told us that leaders are considerate of their well-being. Staff get time to complete their work and do not feel overburdened by it.

The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards have been met since the school opened. This includes making sure that the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are met and compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of vigilance to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Staff are well trained on safeguarding matters, so they are quick to notice any changes in pupils' behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of potential harm. They know the school's procedures for raising concerns about pupils.

Pupils are taught about safe and unsafe risks through the planned projects. For example, they know not to climb a tree without adult supervision.

At the start of the inspection, the single central record of staff suitability checks was not complete. For example, the prohibition from leading a school check was not completed for all governors. Leaders had ensured that by the end of the inspection this was addressed. Therefore, by the end of the inspection, the related independent school standards were met.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The books that pupils read are not always well matched to their phonics knowledge. This affects some pupils' reading fluency. Leaders must ensure that this area is addressed so that the teaching of early reading is more effective and enables all pupils to become fluent and confident readers.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils get enough opportunities to practise and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills. Pupils find it hard to remember the work they have done previously. Leaders must make sure that teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils gain sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects that are taught through projects, such as geography. This means that pupils are held back from learning more and remembering more. Leaders must make sure that the subjects covered and taught through projects provide pupils with learning experiences that deepen their understanding in the respective subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	147455
DfE registration number	314/6029
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10123162
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	27
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Little Forest Folk School Ltd
Headteacher	Leanna Barrett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11,985
Telephone number	07825 990 883
Website	www.libertywoodlandschool.com
Email address	info@libertywoodlandschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the school's first standard inspection. It was registered on 22 August 2019 by the Department for Education (DfE).
- The proprietor is also the headteacher of the school.
- Almost all learning takes place in the school's open outdoor provision.
- The school is registered to admit up to 56 pupils aged four to 11. At present, there are 27 pupils aged four to nine. The school day starts at 9.00am and ends at 5.00pm. The school is closed to pupils on Fridays.
- Physical education takes place off-site at a local secondary school.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. It is in line with the government's latest legislation.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, personal, social and emotional development and art. We held discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. We visited lessons. We talked to pupils about their learning and scrutinised their work. We held meetings with the headteacher and the proprietor.
- We also considered pupils' learning in geography and writing. We observed pupils as they moved around the school and in lessons.
- We met with the designated safeguarding leaders and reviewed documents related to safeguarding. We also met with senior leaders to discuss and review documents relating to behaviour, attendance, early years and SEND.
- We held telephone conversations with parents to ascertain their views. There were six responses to Ofsted Parent View and five free-texts from parents. We considered the nine responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- We looked at documentation and toured the setting to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Rajeshree Mehta, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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