

# Inspection of a good school: Lansdowne School

49 Combermere Road, London SW9 9QD

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 November 2021

## **Outcome**

Lansdowne School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils arrive happily at Lansdowne School each day. They know that they will be safe and well cared for by staff who know them very well. Staff have high expectations of pupils. They skilfully help pupils to access the broad and interesting curriculum on offer. Staff also help pupils to be positive about their future life. They work hard to find ways of developing pupils' independence. Pupils achieve a range of qualifications during their time at school.

Leaders make sure that pupils get the help they need from a range of professionals, including therapists. Staff help pupils to develop their communication skills well. Pupils grow in confidence in talking about themselves and their learning as they progress through the school. For example, school council members talk confidently about changes they want to make at school.

Pupils understand the school rules and the consequences of breaking them. They value the rewards they get for achievement or for good behaviour. For example, they enjoy 'spending' their reward points in the tuck shop. Staff manage pupils' behaviour very well. They have pupils' best interests and safety at the heart of everything they do.

Bullying rarely happens. Pupils said that they trust adults to sort it out if it does.

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

Leaders and governors have identified the right priorities to move the school forward. During the COVID-19 national lockdowns, they worked effectively to keep the school open to all pupils. Pupils' well-being was a clear priority. At the same time, leaders and staff have successfully implemented a broad curriculum. This is enhanced by a wide range of activities within and beyond the school. Pupils enjoy trips related to themes they are exploring in school. For example, they visited London Zoo when they were inventing their own mythical creatures. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of clubs at lunchtime and after

school. They value greatly the adapted bikes which leaders secured through funding from charities. Pupils' faces light up when it is their turn to ride the bikes.

Older pupils benefit from work experience in the local community and vocational training in school. Students in the sixth form were keen to talk about their aims for the future, for instance becoming scientists, hairdressers, train drivers and chefs.

Curriculum planning for individual subjects such as art, physical education (PE) and mathematics is carefully thought out and well sequenced. A strong feature of leaders' work is that they constantly revise and review the curriculum to make sure that it meets the needs of specific cohorts of pupils. However, some aspects of planning do not help teachers to make links between pupils' learning in different subjects. For example, work on keeping safe within personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education does not link up fully with work on keeping safe online in computing.

Staff are highly skilled at supporting pupils with a range of different needs to access the planned curriculum. In most subjects, teachers design lessons that help pupils to build on what they already know and can do. Teaching places strong emphasis on helping pupils to become independent and to develop their language and communication skills. Teachers regularly assess pupils' small steps of achievement to help them plan learning effectively.

Staff have implemented a revised reading and phonics curriculum. As a result, pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read are developing their phonics skills and reading fluency. However, curriculum plans for phonics and reading are not fully linked to those for English. This means that teachers lack specific guidance on supporting pupils to apply their phonics skills in writing as effectively as they do in reading. The school has an abundance of reading books. Occasionally, books chosen are too difficult or too easy for pupils. Nonetheless, most pupils are doing well in their reading.

Teachers think carefully about themes and activities which will engage pupils and capture their interests. This is particularly evident in art, PE and food technology lessons.

Pupils try hard to behave well. They work hard and are resilient when learning is challenging. Staff manage behaviour very well. They are highly skilled at encouraging pupils and refocusing them if they lose concentration. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and nurturing.

Governors are knowledgeable and highly supportive of the work of the school. Teachers are also fully committed to making sure pupils receive a high-quality education. However, in some instances, staff feel that they would like further support in managing their workload and pupils' behaviour.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff make sure that the well-being of every pupil is given the highest importance. Staff know and care for each individual pupil incredibly well. Staff are highly

vigilant and watch out for signs that pupils are feeling sad, vulnerable, unwell or unsafe. All incidents relating to safety or well-being are meticulously recorded and even the smallest concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe online or when they are crossing roads.

Leaders and governors make sure that all relevant recruitment checks are made when new staff join the school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Curriculum plans are ambitious and logically sequenced for individual subjects. Leaders need to strengthen subject planning to help teachers make links between PSHE and other subjects. This will help to deepen pupils' understanding of important themes such as keeping safe.
- The reading and phonics programme has been implemented effectively. This means that pupils at the earliest stages of learning are making progress and gaining fluency in reading. Within English planning, leaders need to make more explicit how they expect pupils to apply their phonics in the development of early writing. This would ensure that teachers know how to help pupils use their phonics skills securely, in both their writing and reading.
- Staff value the training they have received to support them to teach reading effectively. Occasionally, teachers select books for pupils which are either too difficult or too easy for them. Further training for staff on matching books precisely to pupils' stage of reading would strengthen pupils' reading further.
- Senior leaders and governors recognise that they need to take further steps to manage teachers' workload. They need to review roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to managing pupils' behaviour. This will also help to strengthen the way staff feel supported in this aspect of their work.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100654
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200290
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	140
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Osbourn
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Linda Adams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lansdowne.lambeth.sch.uk/">www.lansdowne.lambeth.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 November 2016 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- All pupils at Lansdowne have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder or speech and language needs, and associated learning difficulties. Some pupils also have physical disabilities.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, senior leaders, staff, pupils, parents and governors. This included a meeting with the designated leaders of safeguarding.
- Inspectors scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, communication, PSHE and art. In each of these subjects, inspectors met with teachers who have responsibility for subjects. Inspectors also visited lessons, talked to pupils about their work and met with teaching staff to talk about their approach to the curriculum. Inspectors also looked at other subjects, including mathematics and English.
- The inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and to the staff and pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about different aspects of their school, including safeguarding.

### **Inspection team**

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Angela Corbett

Ofsted Inspector

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