

Inspection of Langham Oaks

School Road, Langham, Colchester, Essex, CO4 5PA

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness Requires improvement

The quality of education Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes Requires improvement

Personal development Requires improvement

Leadership and management Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have experienced a lot of recent changes. The school has grown in size and has relocated to new, fit for purpose buildings. A new headteacher, supported by a new team of leaders, leads and manages the school. Some staff have left and new staff have joined. Some pupils have had to work at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this time, staff have ensured that pupils remain safe and able to continue with their learning. The changes have led to some uncertainty. Currently, not all pupils attend regularly or behave well enough.

The curriculum has changed to give pupils more 'hands-on' learning in small groups with lots of support from staff. Pupils really enjoy practical activities in physical education and sport, food technology and learning outdoors. They are less keen on writing. Not all of them develop into fluent, confident readers because they do not read often enough.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff know them and their personal needs well. Regular English, mathematics and careers lessons provide them with the knowledge needed to make choices about the next stage in their learning. Most pupils leaving Year 11 go on to college placements.

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

The curriculum aims to re-engage pupils in education and give them the academic and social skills needed for the next stage. Not all staff understand how to adapt curriculum planning, so that learning is matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Plans are not followed in the right order, so pupils are unable to recall learning and build on what they already know. Leaders of mathematics and food technology lead the way in making improvements. Information in pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plans) is shared, so staff gain a clear picture of pupils' needs. This is to enable them to consider approaches to teaching and assessment. It is at an early stage of development.

Reading has a low profile. Pupils are reluctant readers. Pupils have few opportunities to read. Books in classrooms are underused. In lessons, pupils will discuss their ideas but are less willing to write. At times, staff do the reading and writing for pupils.

Staff forge good relations and gain pupils' trust. However, behaviour is not managed consistently. Some pupils leave lessons far too often. Swearing often goes unchallenged. A small minority use mobile phones in school. Pupils who refuse to work in, or who leave lessons part-way through disrupt learning.

Pupils say school is a safe place to be. If they feel unsafe they feel they can approach staff, who will always help them sort things out. Staff also say that school is a safe place but would like more pastoral staff to help manage serious misbehaviour. Most parents praise the school's work but would like to see improved behaviour.

Time in tutorials is not used well enough to promote pupils' personal development. Sessions are not sufficiently planned or taught effectively by staff. Assemblies provide good opportunities to learn about British values, consider the lives of others and reflect on what pupils could do to meet the personal targets set for improving their own behaviour and attitudes. The teaching of personal, social and health education has changed. Improved planning and staff training are under way to support this. Careers education is effective. Resources are in place to teach careers lessons. All pupils have a careers interview. Only a few have work placements.

Enrichment activities include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and competitive sport. Pupils engage in art therapy but there is no clear strategy for providing other therapies that could help pupils to overcome the barriers to learning they face.

The headteacher and his team are leading improvements. Staff feel their workload is manageable. Trust leaders have taken action to tackle weaknesses in leadership, and to strengthen staffing. Governance has been replaced with an executive committee to monitor improvements and increase accountability. Trust leaders engage with the local authority to improve the local offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All of the necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children. Designated leaders oversee the safeguarding of all pupils effectively. There is a culture of safeguarding. Pupils and the risks they face are known well. Staff are trained to be vigilant and report any concerns they may have. Electronic procedures are in place to record concerns and the actions taken to resolve them. Links with the local authority, police and other support services are well established. Access and egress to and from the school site is carefully controlled.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Behaviour is not managed consistently. Not all staff challenge pupils who swear and use mobile phones. They do not always follow agreed procedures to tackle disruptive behaviour. Not all staff feel fully supported by leaders in managing incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the agreed procedures to manage pupils' behaviour. They should monitor that these

procedures are used consistently. They should make regular checks that staff feel fully supported when tackling incidents of serious misbehaviour.

- Pupils do not read often enough. They are reluctant to write. At times, staff do the reading and writing for pupils. Leaders should take action to raise the profile of reading and writing. They should ensure that in all subjects, staff plan regular opportunities for pupils to read aloud, read by themselves and write regularly, at length.
- Not all curriculum planning is implemented effectively. Some curriculum plans need updating. Not all teachers follow the revised subject planning. Leaders should monitor that all staff make full use of these plans. They should provide training in adapting them, so that learning in lessons meets the different academic and personal needs of pupils and enables them to remain fully engaged in learning.

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

Unique reference number	141512
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10200526
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Andy Hunter
Headteacher	Simon Dawson
Website	www.langhamoaks.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in April 2015. It is part of the SEAX Multi-Academy Trust, Special Educational Needs Academies.
- Pupils join the school at different times and usually stay until they leave at the end of Year 11. All of them have an EHC plan with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health.
- All of the pupils are boys. Most are of white British heritage. Very few of them have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The headteacher, appointed in November 2019, is the third headteacher since the previous inspection. An associate headteacher from within the trust works alongside him on a temporary basis.
- The school uses the following off-site provision: Rallysport, Essex; Circles Farm Essex.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, associate headteacher, deputy headteacher, a range of other leaders, two groups of staff, two groups of pupils, two representatives of the academy trust, including the chief executive officer, and a school effectiveness officer allocated to the school.
- An inspector held a telephone call with a representative of Essex local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, food technology and art. This included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, discussions with staff and pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's single central record and met with the designated leader for safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 11 free-text responses from parents. They considered 24 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tessa Holledge

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021