

Inspection of a good school: Locking Stumps Community Primary School

Glover Road, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 7PH

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 February 2022

Outcome

Locking Stumps Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and friendly school where pupils form strong relationships with staff and enjoy learning with their friends.

Pupils learn about different forms of discrimination. This develops their awareness of the harmful impact of unacceptable behaviour such as racism and homophobic bullying. Staff do not tolerate bullying or unkind behaviour. Pupils know that adults will deal with any issues that arise quickly and effectively.

Pupils said that they feel safe at school. Staff make sure that pupils have time to talk about any problems. For example, pupils told the inspector that they use the 'worry monster' and the 'stay safe box' to let staff know how they are feeling.

Most pupils achieve well. They rise to the high expectations that staff have of their behaviour and learning. Pupils are polite and articulate. They behave well in lessons and help to make sure that the school community is purposeful and harmonious.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly happy with the school and the progress their children make.

Pupils learn how to be responsible citizens. They demonstrate this as librarians, buddies and digital leaders. Pupils participate in a wealth of extra-curricular activities. They raise funds for different charities and relish trips and educational visits to local places of interest such as zoos and museums.

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

Leaders have developed a broad, interesting and well-ordered curriculum. It is ambitious for all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Across subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils in Years 1 to 6 and children in the early years to know and remember. Most

teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should be taught. This helps them to build on children's and pupils' prior learning as they move through the early years and key stages 1 and 2. Subject leaders support teachers well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding of the intended curriculum.

Teachers use assessment information to help them design new learning and to check on pupils' misconceptions. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on how well some pupils have retained their previous learning. For example, in history, some pupils have forgotten important facts about historical periods. In these subjects, teachers' strategies for addressing the gaps in pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be. This limits some pupils' ability to deepen their understanding.

Leaders have created a strong culture of reading in the school. Pupils and children in the early years develop their phonics knowledge and reading skills through a well-organised curriculum. Pupils develop their reading fluency as they move through the school. For example, older pupils read books by a range of authors confidently and with good expression. Leaders' systems for assessing how well pupils are progressing in phonics and reading ensure that staff are well equipped in identifying any pupils, including those with SEND, who may be falling behind their peers.

Leaders make sure that staff identify pupils with SEND, and those in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language, quickly and accurately. Staff make careful adaptations to resources and levels of support so that pupils can learn the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders work closely with parents and a range of SEND specialists. This ensures that pupils receive expert help if they need it.

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 and children in the early years are immensely proud of their school. Low-level disruption in class is rare. This helps to ensure that the school is a calm and purposeful place where pupils and children learn well in a range of different subjects.

Leaders provide a wide range of extra activities for pupils. For example, pupils attend board game, Harry Potter, science and choir clubs. They also engage in a wide range of sporting activities, including gymnastics, cross county, netball and 'ultimate frisbee'. Pupils are kind spirited. Recently, they made key rings and pompoms, which they sold to raise funds for a cancer charity. Pupils know that their views matter. For example, members of the school council worked with consultants to create the theme and layout for the school's new library.

Staff are very positive about senior leaders' consideration of their mental health and workload. They are appreciative of the coaching and mentoring support available to them. Staff told the inspector that initiatives such as 'well-being days' and breakfast morning help to boost their morale and help them to feel valued.

Governors know the school well. They hold senior leaders accountable for their work and have a strong overview of the curriculum and how it is implemented. Governors know where the school's strengths lie and where it needs to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are proficient at spotting signs of potential neglect or abuse. They take immediate action to record and report any concerns that they have about pupils.

Staff and governors are trained well. They are familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and the latest government guidelines on keeping pupils safe. Leaders work effectively with a wide range of agencies. They take swift action to ensure that pupils get any support that they need.

Staff ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teacher's strategies to help pupils to know and remember the intended curriculum are not as effective as they could be. As a result, pupils' ability to deepen their understanding is limited. Leaders should continue to find out where pupils have gaps in their learning and ensure that the adapted curriculum enables pupils to catch up and make the progress that they should in these subjects.

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 in January 2017.

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	111204
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10211275
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Penny Haughan
Headteacher	Jamie Vermiglio
Website	www.locking-stumps.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and senior leadership team have been appointed.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy head teacher, special educational needs coordinators and the pastoral leader. The inspector held a meeting with eight governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: English, including early reading, science and history. For each deep dive, he looked at the curriculum and spoke with subject leaders. The inspector conducted lesson visits, spoke with pupils and looked at a range of pupils' work. The inspector also talked with class teachers and

teaching assistants from the classes that he visited. He observed pupils reading to an adult.

- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. He also spoke with parents, to gather their views about the school, and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff's and pupils' surveys. The inspector also considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, as well as free-text comments from parents.
- The inspector examined a range of policies, schemes of work and curriculum plans. He also scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. The inspector spoke to safeguarding leaders, and the headteacher, about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents. He also talked with pupils about their safety, welfare and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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