

Inspection of Larkhill Primary School

Wilson Road, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QB

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Larkhill School is a friendly and inclusive place to learn. Pupils are proud of their school. They benefit from regular opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. Leaders make sure there is something for everyone, whether this is performing at Stonehenge or tending to the school garden.

Leaders have raised expectations of pupils' learning. Despite many staffing changes, they have remained focused on securing improvements to the quality of education. Pupils experience a broad and well-planned curriculum that excites and interests them.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times during the school day. They follow the school's 'be ready, respectful and safe' rules. Staff provide effective support to deal with any pupils who present challenging behaviour. Bullying is infrequent. Pupils feel safe in school because they know that if a problem occurs, staff put a stop to it quickly.

This school is proud of its nearby military links. Pupils enjoy attending 'bluey club' where they can write letters to family members when they are deployed away from home. They also value time in forest school, where they learn to apply the school's values of resilience and cooperation.

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

Leaders, staff and governors recognise the positive changes since joining the multi-academy trust. Staff are proud to work at the school. They know that leaders prioritise their workload and well-being. Staff, including those new to their role, speak highly of the training they receive to develop their expertise. They share the ambitions of leaders in wanting the best for every pupil.

Leaders' work to strengthen the curriculum is progressing well. In many subjects, leaders have identified the small steps of knowledge needed for pupils to succeed. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In mathematics, lessons build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers expect pupils to explain their thinking in full sentences, including in Reception class. Pupils have frequent opportunities to secure their learning through the 'do it, secure it and deepen it' approach. They say this helps build their confidence when learning new concepts.

Similarly, in history, leaders have mapped out the important knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn and in what order. They use the rich local history to bring the subject to life. For example, pupils in Year 2 know the significance of the Amesbury Archer. Older pupils are beginning to make connections across different historical periods studied. They can compare the reasons why the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings invaded Britain. Teachers use quizzes and assessments to check what pupils have remembered. This is beginning to help knowledge stick in pupils' memory.

Leaders are not complacent. They know that some subjects need further development. Where this is the case, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and revisit over time. In these subjects, pupils do not gain the same depth of knowledge as they do in others.

Leaders give reading a high profile. Teachers are skilled at showing pupils how to read with expression. As pupils move through the school, they read with increasing fluency. Staff are quick to identify and support anyone who needs extra help. They make sure that pupils read books that match the sounds they are learning. Staff receive regular coaching from the phonics leader to develop their practice. However, a few staff lack the expertise to teach phonics effectively. As a result, some pupils at the early stage of reading do not make the progress that they should.

Leaders expect pupils with SEND to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Staff know pupils and their individual needs well. They successfully adapt the curriculum and give them the right support to succeed, including in the early years. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points. Lessons flow smoothly because pupils know what staff expect of them. Specialist staff provide effective pastoral support for those with complex needs. Over time, this helps pupils to regulate their emotions.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. They provide opportunities for pupils to hold roles of responsibility, such as attendance ambassadors and parliament leaders. Pupils carry out these duties with pride and maturity. They also enthuse about how the variety of clubs, visits and trips enrich the curriculum further. Cultural diversity is celebrated throughout the school. Pupils learn the importance of treating everyone the same, regardless of difference. They are developing into kind and caring citizens.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, have clear systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe. All staff, including governors, receive regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Consequently, they know how to notice and report any safeguarding concerns. Leaders work well with different agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils and families. Recruitment checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school are thorough.

Pupils have a good awareness of keeping safe, including online safety. They know the importance of reporting any concerns to adults.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff lack the expertise to teach phonics effectively. This results in some pupils at the early stage of reading not keeping up as well as they should. Leaders need to continue with their plans to train and support all staff in the teaching of phonics to help the weakest readers catch up quickly.
- In a few of the wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge pupils need to know and build over time. This means that pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge they should across all subjects. Leaders need to make sure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out what pupils need to learn and remember from Reception through to Year 6.

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	145545
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10227702
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nina Gibson
Headteacher	Emily Taylor
Website	www.larkhill.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Larkhill Primary School is part of The White Horse Federation multi-academy trust. It joined the trust in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Larkhill Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school has gone through many changes to staffing. There have been three new teachers in post since January 2022 and a new special educational needs coordinator.
- The vast majority of pupils on the school's roll come from military families. There are high rates of pupil mobility throughout the academic year.
- The school has its own local governing board with delegated responsibilities.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative learning provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other staff, the chief executive officer, central trust staff and the chair of the local governing board.
- The lead inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of education for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects, including personal, social, health and economic education.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 read to an adult.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff, trustees and governors about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. The lead inspector met with the headteacher to discuss and scrutinise how leaders respond to behaviour incidents.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Katharine Anstey

Ofsted 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 2022