

Inspection of Long Crendon School

Chilton Road, Long Crendon, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 9BZ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

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

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Families gather eagerly outside school each morning and children greet each other cheerfully. Older pupils look after their buddies in younger year groups. Some wait for their buddies to reassure them and take them into school. Break-times are a hive of activity. Some pupils train to be play leaders, and they relish the opportunity to organise activities for the younger pupils. Others prefer to tend the school garden and proudly shared the benefits of sampling their produce with inspectors.

Pupils feel safe here. They know who to talk to about their worries. Staff and pupils genuinely strive to live out the school values, often referring to them. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident to tell adults if they are worried and know that staff will deal with concerns effectively. The school has a strong focus on well-being. Some pupils become health and well-being ambassadors. Other pupils join eco-club and some join therapy and nurture groups.

Staff have high expectations for the behaviour of pupils. Classrooms are purposeful and orderly. Routines are well established. Leaders have raised expectations across the curriculum but have more work to do to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve their very best.

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

The recent changes in leadership at the school have been unsettling. The new interim headteacher has made a significant impact in a short amount of time at the school. Leaders are ambitious for pupils. Curriculum thinking has been a recent focus and is starting to have an impact on the learning of pupils at the school. Leaders have started planned learning in key stages 1 and 2 in a coherent way. This is so that knowledge and skills develop over time and build on the already very firm foundations in the early years.

Teaching in Reception is exceptional, giving children a wonderful start to their education. Leaders have designed a curriculum that is rich and varied. It enables children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve their very best. Children thrive in the calm and focused atmosphere. They love learning. Staff capitalise on the children's natural curiosity to the full. The learning environment, indoors and outside, thoughtfully provides children with the best chances to learn. Behaviour is exemplary. The teaching of early reading is strong. Children learn in a vocabulary rich environment. Staff say, 'Keep good words in your head for your word bank.' Parental engagement is high and all speak positively about the provision.

The leadership of reading is clear and precise. Staff who teach early reading are well trained. Leaders have adopted and developed a coherent phonics programme. Pupils receive support and challenge appropriately. Staff who teach phonics are well trained. Pupils say they love reading. The library inspires pupils with its prominent

display, which reads 'Today a reader, tomorrow a leader'. Pupils learn to read confidently and fluently.

In key stages 1 and 2, subject leaders have selected the knowledge they want pupils to learn and have sequenced it in a sensible order. However, lessons are not always crafted in a way so as to develop the skills and understanding of all pupils. In some subjects, for example English and history, teachers focus too much on completing tasks rather than helping pupils to understand what it is they need to learn.

Teachers in key stages 1 and 2 do not use assessment to help them understand what pupils know and can do as well as they do in the early years. Teachers do not adapt activities well enough to support or challenge pupils as appropriate. This slows their progress in learning and remembering more. Sometimes this leads to low-level disruption in lessons when pupils are not challenged. Pupils with SEND do not receive tailored support specific to their needs. Activities are not adapted to ensure that pupils can achieve success despite the challenges they face.

The wider personal development of pupils is a strength. Recent developments to the personal, social and health education programme have begun to make an impact. Pupils' attendance is good. Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits for pupils. Despite the disruption to these activities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the school has made significant efforts to continue offering these enriching activities. Pupils develop confidence and leadership skills within the wide variety of opportunities offered, for example acting as junior road safety officers to help younger children stay safe on the roads leading to school.

Leaders and governors have not always had detailed oversight of systems and processes in the school. Many recent changes in leadership have contributed to this. The new interim headteacher has acted swiftly to eradicate the legacy of weaknesses. Governors have provided support to leaders but have not always provided rigorous challenge to ensure leaders' own evaluation of systems and processes are sufficiently robust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders respond appropriately to concerns when they arise. Staff are vigilant to potential concerns and, no matter how small, report these using the school's robust reporting system. The caring culture of the school is reflected in how staff provide support for pupils. Staff are well trained in how to spot potential concerns.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They also learn about keeping others safe, and they take on positions of responsibility to assist with this. For example, older pupils know to report concerns to staff if they are worried about their younger buddies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In key stages 1 and 2, leaders have developed strong curriculum thinking, but teaching activities are not always appropriately planned to enable progression. As a result, pupils are not learning the key concepts or building on previous knowledge. Activities are not designed to help all pupils learn and remember more. Subject leaders must evaluate the teaching of the intended curriculum more thoroughly and ensure that staff are able to provide learning activities that are appropriate for their class.
- Assessment is not sufficiently embedded in any subject yet, apart from in the early years. Teaching is not always informed by what pupils reveal they know and can remember. Evidence teachers collect from checking what pupils understand in lessons should be used, consistently across all subjects, to plan the next steps of teaching.
- Not all teachers use the information regarding pupils with SEND effectively in key stages 1 and 2, so often their approaches are too generic and do not take into account pupils' needs effectively. This means pupils with SEND are not learning to the best of their ability. Leaders must ensure that all staff are effectively trained to provide support for pupils with SEND that is tailored to their specific needs.

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	110338
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10228886
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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Liz Guerin (Co-chair) Olly Minton (Co-chair)
Headteacher	Amanda Cook (Interim headteacher)
Website	www.longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 September 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The interim headteacher joined the school at the end of April 2022 and works at the school for three days a week.
- The two new co-chairs of the governing body have been in post since the end of April 2022.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative 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 meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors also met with governors and spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, history and physical education. 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 heard pupils read.
- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum, visited other lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The lead inspector visited one of the alternative providers that the school uses.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 122 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 80 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 19 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey so inspectors spoke to as many pupils as they could during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lynn Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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