

# Inspection of a good school: Longwick Church of England Combined School

Walnut Tree Lane, Longwick, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire HP27 9SJ

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

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

Pupils feel a strong sense of community and are proud of their school. They strive to achieve the school's values such as responsibility, compassion and wisdom. This reflects the school's strong Christian ethos of 'Inspiring a love of learning through our Christian values'.

Pupils are happy and form strong bonds with their friends. They learn to stand up for what is right and are encouraged 'to look out for one another'. Pupils feel safe because they trust the adults that look after them. They meet their teachers' high expectations by working hard in lessons. Pupils enjoy the experiences that are woven into their learning. Visits to the Royal Albert Hall and the annual village May Day celebrations are highlights in their memory. They particularly like learning outside as part of the forest school.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. They understand the different forms bullying can take. When bullying does happen, staff take it seriously, acting swiftly.

Leaders want the very best for pupils. However, leaders have not yet ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. As a result, some pupils are not building their phonics knowledge well enough in order to read accurately. In addition, pupils' learning in some subjects is not as well organised as it should be.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum to stimulate pupils' interest and provide memorable learning experiences. Teachers plan interesting topics such as 'optical illusions' in art. These topics capture pupils' imagination and promote links to other subjects such as science.

The order that pupils learn new knowledge in subjects such as computing and science is logically sequenced. In these subjects, pupils practise their skills and build on their knowledge. In other subjects, leaders have not looked closely enough at the order in which concepts are learned. Some subject leaders do not have the necessary knowledge to develop learning in their subject effectively. As a result, some pupils do not have the basic skills to build learning. They are unable to fully develop the skills and knowledge they need.

Leaders prioritise reading. Most pupils are taught to read effectively. Children in Reception learn phonics from day one. They learn to sound out letters and are introduced to words that rhyme. Teachers use this strong foundation to help pupils learn accurately and fluently. Pupils have positive attitudes to their reading and enjoy listening to teachers read. This helps them develop a love of reading. However, there is a lack of consistency in how phonics is taught. Some pupils are not given sufficient time to memorise letter sounds and are moved on too quickly. Consequently, they find it difficult to build their knowledge. Leaders are taking action to ensure that staff are better trained to deliver phonics effectively.

Early mathematics is well taught. In Reception, children learn quickly to count to five and then 10. Leaders make sure that pupils build on their understanding of numbers throughout the school. As a result, pupils' number skills are well developed. Pupils practise using their mathematics knowledge regularly and have opportunities to deepen their understanding through problem-solving and reasoning.

Most subjects are well planned. They are enriched with opportunities such as 'African drumming' in music. Pupils enjoy these activities, and it helps them remember their learning. In computing, the basic knowledge of loading and saving work is covered effectively. Older pupils undertake more challenging work using graphics. They build on their previously learned skills to design a three-dimensional toy. Pupils are encouraged to apply knowledge learned in one subject to another. For example, younger pupils used pictograms learned in mathematics to show how many pupils liked the recipe of their biscuits in design technology.

Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and learning. Children in Reception quickly learn classroom rules and routines. This makes them feel safe and secure. Teachers regularly check on pupils' work in lessons to make sure that they understand their learning. There are appropriate plans in place for those pupils who have fallen behind in their learning. Many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive regular emotional support, alongside extra help.

Pupils feel cared for and trust the adults who look after them. They are accepting of people's differences and learn about different cultures and religions. They are keen to take up posts of responsibility such as house captains and school councillors. They enjoy the opportunities to take part in after-school activities.

Governors and the trust provide valuable support to leaders. This has particularly been the case in stabilising staffing at the school, which has been a concern for some parents.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff at all levels recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. They have high-quality, ongoing training, enabling them to be confident in what action to take if they think a pupil is at risk.

Pupils learn regularly how to stay safe. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children training, visits from the police and ongoing e-safety training help pupils stay safe online. They are very aware of the dangers of using social media platforms.

Together with the family liaison officer, leaders work closely with outside agencies to make sure that pupils and their families get the help they need.

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

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

- Some pupils are not making as much progress in their reading as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff are fully trained to deliver the school's phonics scheme. Pupils must be given time to practise and learn sounds and commit them to memory before moving on so that they can read with accuracy.
- Some aspects of individual subjects have not been looked at closely enough. The majority of subject leaders are inexperienced in leading a subject. Leaders should ensure that they have the necessary skills to lead and monitor their subjects effectively.
- Most foundation subjects have not been fully developed to meet the needs of pupils. Leaders need to make sure that the sequence of learning is correct and that opportunities for pupils to practise and deepen their knowledge are in place for all subjects. Pupils need to be able to build on their skills and knowledge in all subjects to commit learning to their long-term memory.

## **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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2018.

## **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.

## **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>	146048
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240337
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	194
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Michael Mill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen McCammond
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.longwick.bucks.sch.uk">www.longwick.bucks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Longwick Church of England Combined School converted to become an academy school in September 2019. It is one of 11 schools in the Diocesan Bucks School Trust. The trust delegates some of the responsibility to the local governing body. This is set out in the trust's scheme of work.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2022.
- The governing body manages the before- and after-school childcare provision.
- The school does not currently use any 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The headteacher was absent from school for the duration of the inspection.
- The inspector met with the deputy headteacher and other school staff.

- The inspector also met with members of the local governing body, including the chair, and spoke to representatives of the trustees.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer and the director of education for the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector spoke with staff, pupils, governors and the trust's safeguarding lead. The inspector met with the deputy safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions. The inspector also looked at safeguarding records and actions and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- The inspector spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups. He observed behaviour in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- The views of staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys, were considered.
- The responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written responses, were also taken into account.

### **Inspection team**

Bill James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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