

Inspection of Longford Primary Academy

Ascot Drive, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 1PD

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Longford Primary Academy is a friendly and welcoming school where pupils enjoy being with their friends and engaging in their learning. The school's ethos 'hand in hand we learn' is reflected through many aspects of school life. Staff know pupils well and care about them. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

Some pupils do not know and remember the curriculum as well as leaders expect. Leaders have secured many recent improvements in school provision but know that there is more work to do. They are especially focused on improving the quality of education that the school provides.

Pupils learn about different types of bullying and understand that such behaviour is not accepted at the school. Incidents are very rare. Pupils trust adults to sort things out quickly when necessary.

Pupils are proud of their school. They make their own improvement suggestions through the school council. This arrangement boosts their confidence and helps them to develop a sense of responsibility. Leaders use assemblies to promote pupils' understanding of social issues and current events. Pupils are encouraged to share their opinions by voting about these issues. This helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

Senior leaders, relatively new to their posts, have a clear vision for the school. They understand their roles and they work well as a team. Governors and trust executives support these leaders well. They have ensured leaders access useful training and that they collaborate with other professionals from within the trust. This work is having a positive influence. Most parents are very positive about recent changes in school provision. However, leaders' vision for the school is not yet fully realised. Many of their ideas are in the early stages of being implemented. Leaders recognise that they have more work to do to improve the school.

Subject leaders have made changes to the way that the curriculum is designed. In most subjects, the curriculum is now well planned. The key information that pupils are expected to know and remember is set out clearly. Teachers teach a series of lessons that are designed to build pupils' knowledge in a logical order. However, the curriculum is not yet fully impacting what pupils know and do. Many pupils have gaps in their knowledge. They do not securely remember the essential information that leaders expect them to know by the time they leave the school.

There is variation in staff's expertise. Some adults do not yet have the subject knowledge that they need to teach the curriculum well. Sometimes the explanations that staff give when presenting new information are not clear. Adults do not plan activities that help pupils learn as well as they might in some cases. Leaders have

identified the need to improve teachers' subject knowledge. They have put a programme in place to support staff's professional development.

Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read benefit from daily phonics lessons. These lessons are well-matched to pupils' abilities. All staff have been trained in how to teach the phonics programme. Many do this well, but some are still crafting their expertise. This means that some lessons are not yet as effective as leaders intend them to be. Children in the early years are getting off to a good start and making progress through the planned phonics curriculum. However, some pupils across the school have gaps in their learning and are not yet able to read well enough.

Pupils behave well around the school and during lessons. They are eager to learn and listen carefully to their teachers. Their behaviour creates a calm and purposeful environment that benefits everyone. Most children enjoy school and attend regularly. However, some pupils persistently miss school. This hinders them from reaching their potential.

Pupils benefit from a range of lessons and activities that promote their personal development. The school's personal, social and health education curriculum builds pupils' understanding of people from cultures and backgrounds that are different to their own. Pupils speak about the importance of values such as tolerance and respect. They put these values into action. For example, they take part in charitable works such as collecting food for vulnerable members of the local community.

Leaders engage well with staff and work hard to promote staff's well-being. Their approach has created a happy and productive spirit in the school. Staff's morale is high. The whole staff team are enthusiastic about continuing work to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured the school has a strong safeguarding culture. Adults understand the possible risks to children and are alert to raise concerns if necessary. Leaders promptly deal with such issues. They work well with external agencies to help children receive the support that they need.

Pupils learn about potential risks through their study of the curriculum. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Older pupils take part in workshops that develop their awareness of issues in the local community. This helps them be ready for the challenges involved in moving to secondary school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There have been weaknesses in the way that the curriculum has been planned and taught in the past. This means that pupils do not know and remember the key information that leaders expect. Leaders should continue to improve the quality of education so that pupils understand and remember key curriculum information.
- There is variation in staff's expertise. Sometimes adults do not choose activities that help pupils to learn well. Leaders should continue to develop staff's understanding of how to teach the curriculum well.
- Rates of persistent absence remain high. This means that some pupils miss too much of their education. Leaders should continue to work with families to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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

Unique reference number	145685
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10241484
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Johnny Anthony Anderson
Principal	Louise Lawrence
Website	www.longford.staffs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The principal and vice-principal started in September 2021. The assistant principal started in September 2022.
- Three new members of the local governing committee were appointed in September 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 principal and other senior leaders.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, art and design, mathematics and design and technology. For each of these subjects, 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 pupils and staff about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the leader responsible for safeguarding. He also reviewed safeguarding records and checked the school's single central record.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their opinions of behaviour at the school.
- Inspectors spoke with members of staff individually and in groups. Inspectors took account of responses to staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors visited the before-school provision and spoke to pupils who attend.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Forrest	His Majesty's Inspector
Rob Bourdon-Pierre	Ofsted Inspector

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