

Inspection of Lodge Farm Primary School

Mobbsbury Way, Chells, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 0HP

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 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

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at this school. They are kept safe and are well cared for by the adults here. Bullying happens rarely, and when it does, pupils are confident that adults will ensure it stops.

Children in the early years join in lessons with enthusiasm. Older pupils settle to work quickly. Sometimes, a few pupils lose their focus in lessons. This happens when teachers are not clear enough about the learning.

Pupils are keen to do well. They readily attempt the tasks set for them. However, too often, adults do not spot and correct mistakes and misconceptions quickly enough. When this happens, pupils do not learn what leaders intend. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Around the school, pupils show good manners and kindness to each other. They readily hold doors open for each other and say 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting. Young children learn to take turns. They share books together in the cosy reading area.

Breaktimes are energetic and fun. Pupils readily include everyone in the games and share the equipment. They are proud to look after each other. They also raise money for charities to help others less fortunate than themselves.

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

Leaders want pupils to achieve well. They ensure that pupils enjoy a broad curriculum across the school. In the early years and in some subjects, leaders' curriculum planning sets out clear goals and the small steps of learning required to reach these. However, too often, leaders' curriculum plans do not set out clearly enough the most important content for learning and how this develops over time.

Leaders have not ensured that staff have the subject expertise to interpret these plans. As a result, teachers do not always select the most appropriate teaching approaches to enable pupils to achieve well. Staff do not routinely use assessment information well to adjust their teaching.

Leaders do not have the assessment information they need to know if pupils are understanding and remembering the planned curriculum. Leaders do not know precisely where they need to adapt their curriculum planning to improve pupils' learning.

Children in the Nursery enjoy sharing books. In Reception, children start to learn phonics straightaway. They practise the sounds they are learning with well-matched books. In key stage 1, pupils read independently but their books do not always give them enough practice with the phonics they are learning. Teachers check pupils' phonics knowledge regularly through assessments, but they sometimes miss

mistakes in lessons. Teachers put in place extra help straightaway for pupils who need it. This helps pupils to catch up.

Teachers introduce children to classic stories and rhymes in the early years. Leaders have ensured older pupils have a range of high-quality texts to read. Older pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the books they are reading. Leaders have recently introduced a new reading scheme. Although adults have had some training to teach this scheme, some require further training so they spot and address errors rapidly when they occur. However, most pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils behave well around the school. They can get on with their learning in lessons. In some lessons, a few pupils lose concentration. Teachers quickly spot this and help these pupils to attend to their learning.

Pupils know the Lodge Farm 3Rs: 'Respect, Resilience, Responsibility'. Older pupils help around the school as house captains and play leaders. Parents would appreciate a wider range of opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents.

In the early years, leaders work closely with parents to identify children who need extra support. They involve external professionals quickly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and follow their advice. Older pupils who need extra help with learning and behaviour get personalised support in class and interventions. Targets for this extra help are sometimes unclear. As a result, leaders do not always know whether the additional support is meeting needs or should be adjusted.

In the early years, teachers communicate regularly with parents so they know what children are learning in school and how to help at home. Parents of older pupils do not get the same information and are less confident about how to support their children.

Governors are working with the local authority to improve their understanding of what needs to be done to bring about improvements. Governors know their statutory responsibilities and have commissioned external support to ensure that these are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders develop strong relationships with families. Pupils share their concerns in class 'worry boxes'. Leaders ensure that all staff get the training they need to spot any signs of concern. Concerns are recorded promptly and accurately. Leaders make sure that extra help is provided straightaway for those who need it. They work closely with external agencies to keep pupils safe.

Across the school, pupils learn how to stay safe. Leaders are vigilant when recruiting staff, to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Leaders' recruitment checks are thorough. Records of these checks are accurately maintained and up to date.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders are not sufficiently clear about what is to be learned and how this will be assessed. As a result, pupils do not consistently get work which enables them to learn what leaders intend. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that all curriculum plans clearly set out what pupils need to know and how teachers will check this. Teachers should use these checks to adjust their teaching where needed.
- Some adults do not have the expertise and subject knowledge to teach all subjects well. This means that they do not spot and address misconceptions by pupils promptly enough. Leaders should provide guidance and training for teachers so that pupils can achieve well across the curriculum.
- Leaders do not have systematic ways of checking on the quality of provision. Consequently, they do not understand clearly enough what is working well or what needs to improve. Leaders should review and evaluate the information they have about the quality of education provided, to identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

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	132091
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10226938
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Debbie Nash and Emma Hone (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Helen Turner
Website	www.lodgefarm.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders use one registered off-site provider of alternative education.
- There has been recent turnover in governors, which has resulted in several new members of the governing body.

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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the senior leaders and teachers, including subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the co-chairs of the governing body.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and, where relevant, looked at samples of work by pupils.
- The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans and safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The inspectors considered 66 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 51 free-text comments. They also considered 37 responses to the staff survey and 274 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. The inspectors also observed the behaviour of pupils at playtimes and around the school.

Inspection team

Lynne Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Harbrow

Ofsted Inspector

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