

Inspection of Lyons Hall School

Deerleap Way, Braintree, Essex CM7 9FH

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This school was last inspected 13 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.

Previous inspection grade

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?

Pupils at Lyons Hall Primary School achieve exceptionally well and are proud of their school. They can confidently talk about what they know and use this knowledge across all areas of the curriculum.

Pupils feel safe. If they have a worry adults will help. Pupils say bullying rarely happens and if it does, adults take immediate action, so it stops.

While pupils enjoy their learning and participate fully in lessons. There is a small minority of pupils who take time to settle and need reminders to focus on their learning.

Pupils play well together. Older pupils are 'Lyon Leaders' and are on hand to support younger children. Pupils relish the opportunities they have to 'make someone's day', for example handing out their 'FISH' in the celebration assembly.

Opportunities are plentiful for pupils to share what they think. This has enabled them to make changes to school life. They decide which charities to support and organise a range of events, for example 'Lyons Got Talent'.

There are many clubs that pupils can attend. These are inclusive. Changes are made to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can access these.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. It enables pupils to build their knowledge and skills extremely well over time from early years to Year 6. This is because pupils revisit learning and make strong connections with new knowledge. Pupils are able to apply what they have learned from other areas of the curriculum to new learning. This means that pupils learn exceptionally well over time and are well prepared for their next stage.

Leaders are continuously reflecting on the effectiveness of their curriculum. They carry out a wide range of research to guide and inform improvements. For example, leaders recently adapted the support for pupils who are falling behind with their reading. As a result, an exceptionally well-planned, catch-up reading programme helps pupils to quickly become confident fluent readers.

Leaders provide effective training to make sure that teachers have secure subject knowledge and are confident to teach all subjects. Teachers accurately use assessment to identify gaps or opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Regular unseen tasks are given to pupils to check that they remember have what they have learned. Teachers use the information carefully and accurately from this to plan pupils' next steps.

While leaders have high expectations for behaviour, there are a few occasions where pupils need several reminders to focus on their learning. This is particularly the case when pupils are moving between activities and there is a requirement to settle to learning quickly. A few members of staff do not routinely implement the high expectations and clear routines that leaders promote and expect. This leads to some variation in learning focus in a small number of lessons.

Reading is prioritised across the school. From the moment children join Reception, a love of reading is encouraged. Reading skills are threaded throughout the curriculum with a range of diverse texts, which support all subject areas. Pupils quickly begin to learn the sounds that letters make through a carefully planned phonics programme. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. This contributes towards pupils becoming confident and fluent readers.

Children in the early years are very enthusiastic about their learning. Leaders have planned a unique curriculum that carefully considers the development and needs of the youngest children. Children routinely make connections between what they remember and what they are moving on to learn. Children's learning experiences makes sure that they are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers confidently adapt learning, so that pupils with SEND can learn successfully alongside their peers. They make very good progress across the school. Pupils with SEND feel valued because they have a voice that is listened to through the SEND school council.

Leaders plan pupils' wider development exceptionally well. Pupils learn to consider their own well-being. Pupils learn how to nurture healthy relationships and they respect differences. One pupil said, 'We are all the same, but all special in our own skin.'. This well-considered curriculum helps pupils develop respect and resilience.

Governors and trustees carry out their statutory duties appropriately. They undertake regular monitoring, so they know the strengths of the school as well as leaders' ambitions for further improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive culture for safeguarding. Checks carried out by leaders ensure all staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Staff know they all are responsible for safeguarding pupils. They are well trained on what signs to look out for if pupils are at risk and know what systems to follow to seek help and support.

When concerns are raised, these are followed up promptly by leaders. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies, where additional support is needed.

Pupils know how to keep safe both in school and in the wider world, for example, by making sure their passwords are strong and that they do not share personal information with others online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of staff do not consistently reinforce routines for pupils to understand and demonstrate the high expectations for learning behaviour in place. This impacts some pupils' ability to focus on learning in a minority of lessons. Leaders need to provide further support to staff where it is needed, so that all pupils are able to demonstrate consistent and highly effective learning behaviours.

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	138028
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10242813
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	563
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Darren Cross
Headteacher	Andrew Smith
Website	www.lyonshall.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 th and 8 th July 2009

Information about this school

- Lyons Hall Primary School converted to academy status in September 2012 becoming part of the Learning Pathways Academy Trust.
- There is a specialist resourced provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Leaders provide a daily breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with two members of the local governing body and the trust. This included the chair of the local governing body, who is also chair of the board of trustees. Inspectors looked at monitoring and minutes of local governing body and trust meetings.
- Deep dives were carried out by inspectors in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history, and art. They met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also visited breakfast club, play and lunchtimes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were looked at by inspectors. This included scrutinising the single central record and meeting with the designated safeguarding leads to review other safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered 118 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 118 free-text comments. In addition, an inspector spoke with parents on the gate. Inspectors also considered the 64 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, and 82 responses from pupils to Ofsted's survey of their views.

Inspection team

Sharon Waldron, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Crane	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector

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