

Inspection of a good school: The Lancaster School

82 Jasmin Road, Birchwood, The Lancaster School, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 0QQ

Inspection date: 12 January 2023

Outcome

The Lancaster School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get a good deal at this welcoming and inclusive school. They say that they enjoy school and are happy and safe here. Overall, pupils behave well. This includes during break and lunchtimes. Pupils are confident that staff deal with any rare instances of bullying quickly and fairly.

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know the pupils and the local community extremely well. Consequently, pupils and their families receive extra help or support promptly.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. There are sports, music, gardening and cookery clubs. Pupils benefit from a variety of visitors to school and from trips out to local places of interest. 'Fabulous Fridays' and 'Well-being Wednesdays' enable pupils to raise money for charities. They also learn new skills such as yoga and relaxation techniques.

The vast majority of parents hold positive views of the school. One comment which sums up the school's ethos was: 'Not only do they teach the children academic things, they also teach them how to be good people and good friends.'

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

Leaders have made a good start in designing a well-sequenced curriculum. This work starts in the early years. This is particularly the case in mathematics and science. Here, leaders have ensured that the exact knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn and when, is clear. There are opportunities for pupils to build on their prior learning. For example, in Year 1, pupils deepen their knowledge, and improve their vocabulary, of animals at different points during the year. However, leaders still have some work to do in a small number of subjects.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They spot and correct pupils' misconceptions quickly. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 were enjoying the challenge of using coins. They were accurately comparing different amounts of money. However, staff were quick to carefully explain any mistakes. Teachers frequently check what pupils have remembered. Any gaps in pupils' knowledge are spotted quickly and addressed in later lessons.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics and early reading. A new phonics scheme has been carefully and thoughtfully introduced. It starts in the early years. Staff have received effective training. Pupils have reading books at the correct level of challenge. They successfully use their phonic skills to decode any unfamiliar words. Frequent assessments quickly highlight any pupils who might be struggling. Such pupils then receive daily 'keep up' sessions to help prevent them from falling behind. Pupils say they enjoy reading. They like choosing books from the recently introduced and well-stocked library.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils learn about faiths and cultures that are different from their own. They have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships education and of different family types. Pupils are taught the British values of, for example, respect, tolerance and the rule of law. Pupils are being prepared well for life in modern Britain.

There are clear procedures in place for the identification and support for pupils with SEND. This includes any children with SEND in the early years. Teachers adapt their lessons so that pupils with SEND achieve well. Staff have received appropriate training. There are strong links with outside agencies. These include the behaviour and autism teams, occupational therapy and an educational psychologist.

In the early years, teachers provide a variety of suitable and well-planned activities. Staff are skilled in developing children's vocabulary and knowledge of number. The well-resourced outdoor area helps to improve children's physical skills. Children are confident and polite. There are sensible routines for them to follow. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the various training opportunities that are made available. They say that leaders are sensitive to their well-being and workload. Leaders provide the governing body with appropriate information. The knowledgeable governing body is effective in its roles. Governors find out for themselves what is happening and ask challenging questions during meetings. They hold leaders fully to account for their actions.

Leaders have developed successful strategies to recently reduce pupils' absence and persistent absence rates. However, for a small number of pupils, these rates are still too high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have received effective safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about such issues as domestic violence, county lines drug trafficking, female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff know the potential signs of abuse to look out for. Leaders keep very thorough safeguarding records. They take prompt action and contact the necessary outside agencies should the need arise. Leaders have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe when crossing roads and when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the exact content that leaders want pupils to learn, and when, is not as precise as it could be. Teachers are not always clear about the exact knowledge, skills and vocabulary that they should be teaching. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are well designed and sequenced so that teachers are left in no doubt as to what they should be teaching and when they should be teaching it.
- Some pupils do not attend school frequently enough. Others are persistently absent. Consequently, this small number of pupils are missing valuable learning. Leaders should ensure that these pupils attend school every day so that learning time is not lost.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2011.

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	120686
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10211613
Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Brian Main
Headteacher	Naomi Haughton
Website	www.lancaster.lincs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up their role in January 2021.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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 various meetings with the interim headteachers and other staff. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke with leaders about some other subjects. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.

- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Inspectors checked staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding records were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's parent and staff questionnaires.
- The headteacher was absent during the inspection.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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