

Inspection of a good school: Loxley CofE Community Primary School

Loxley, Warwick, Warwickshire CV35 9JT

Inspection date:

28 February 2023

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. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small village school with a strong family ethos. Christian values of community, respect, dignity and tolerance shape all aspects of school life. Pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. Pupils feel safe and valued. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They say that new leaders have introduced many positive changes.

Pupils concentrate well in lessons. They take pride in their work and enjoy learning. Behaviour is good. Bullying is exceptionally rare. Pupils are confident that, should bullying occur, staff would deal with it quickly. Inspection evidence supports this.

Leaders have improved the teaching of early reading. However, there remains some inconsistencies in how phonics is taught. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, especially their learning in computing and art and design. In some subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils need to remember to help them build on what they already know. This can slow their progress.

Pupils are proud of the work they do to raise money for different charities. They say that, 'Everyone puts in a lot of effort - especially with the village bonfire night.' These activities foster a sense of responsibility and belonging.

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

There have been significant changes in the school's leadership and staffing recently. Some subject leaders are new to their roles, having joined in January 2023. Staff are beginning to work in closer partnership with other schools in the federation to share curriculum expertise. Staff value this and say that it is helping to keep their workload manageable.

Leaders recognise the importance of all children learning to read quickly and have prioritised this. They have introduced a new phonics programme to improve the teaching of early reading. This sets out clearly the sounds children should know and remember by the end of each term. Most staff have received training on the teaching of phonics. However, some staff do not have the expertise they need to teach early reading effectively. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics. At times, the books that pupils read are not accurately matched to the sounds that they know. This slows the rate at which pupils become fluent and confident readers.

The school lacks a whole-school approach to teaching language comprehension. Currently, opportunities for pupils to read and discuss a wide range of increasingly challenging texts are not consistent across the school. This limits pupils' comprehension skills and wider knowledge about language, particularly for those pupils who do not read regularly beyond school.

Teachers generally use assessment well and adapt the curriculum for the small mixed-age classes. In mathematics, learning is sequenced towards very clear, ambitious outcomes from early years to Year 6. There is a strong focus on securing pupils' confidence and mental fluency. This starts in the Reception Year where children make a good start in learning about number. Through fun, practical activities, such as threading beads and counting, teachers encourage children to recognise and talk about number correspondences. This prepares them well for Year 1 work. Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. Pupils are confident about how to get better at mathematics. They achieve well.

Some subjects are taught through a four-yearly topic cycle. This helps to avoid repetition for the mixed-age classes. However, within each topic, the curriculum does not always identify the precise subject knowledge, skills and vocabulary leaders want pupils to know and remember. This makes it difficult for pupils to connect their learning together and leads to pupils having gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders work closely with a range of agencies to assess pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and identify appropriate support. Even when pupils have high levels of need, they are well integrated into school life and access the same curriculum. This inclusive approach helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Leaders place great importance on pupils' personal development. Work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of high quality. Pupils enjoy learning about world religions and different cultures. As a result, they are very accepting and respectful of others. Pupils show a strong understanding of global issues and the importance of equality.

Staff feel proud to work at the school. They talk of the caring ethos and the good team spirit. Staff feel valued and appreciate leaders' consideration for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established an effective safeguarding team in school. Staff are vigilant and trained to spot any changes in pupils' behaviour or character. Leaders ensure that new staff are fully trained in the school's safeguarding systems. There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff say that 'safeguarding is always on the agenda'. Records show that leaders take swift action when concerns are raised about pupils' safety. They work with external agencies to provide support for families.

The curriculum encourages pupils to recognise risks and stay safe in different situations, including the dangers of using online forums.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of phonics teaching is variable and inconsistent across different groups. Some staff do not have the level of expertise needed to teach phonics well. Additionally, the books that some pupils read do not always closely match to the sounds that they know. This slows the rate at which pupils become fluent and confident readers. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive high-quality phonics training so that they have the expertise to implement the phonics programme with consistency.
- The school lacks a coherent approach to teaching language comprehension. Currently, opportunities for pupils to read and discuss a wide range of increasingly challenging texts varies across the school. This limits pupils' comprehension skills and wider knowledge about language, especially for those pupils who do not read regularly beyond school. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for teaching reading is ambitious for all pupils so that the breadth and depth of pupils' fluency and comprehension build over time.
- In some subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. This means that pupils struggle to connect their learning together, and develop gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects identifies the most important knowledge that pupils should learn so that they can build successfully on previous learning.

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 November 2017.

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	125639
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10256982
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Pavey
Head of School	Claire Woolley
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Plaskitt
Website	www.loxleyprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation of three rural schools in Stratford-upon-Avon. It is much smaller than the average primary school.
- The head of school took up post in April 2022.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- This is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. The school received its most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) on 12 March 2020.

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.

- Owing to the size of the school, the head of school and executive headteacher were involved in most inspection activities. Inspectors also met with subject leaders for mathematics, English and early reading, and history.
- Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority and held a telephone conversation with the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, considered curriculum design, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors heard several pupils read. They met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and life in school. Inspectors met with parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance were checked.
- Inspectors checked the school's single central records and safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors met with all staff to talk about the curriculum, staff workload, and the behaviour and personal development of pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime, and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors talked to parents and considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and from their online questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stuart Evans

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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