

Inspection of Larkrise Primary School

Boundary Brook Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX4 4AN

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

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?

Larkrise Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive community where pupils are cared for and nurtured. Pupils demonstrate the school values of creativity, kindness and adventure through the way they treat others and approach their learning. They know their teachers expect lots from them and enjoy rising to this challenge.

Bullying is uncommon, but when it does happen leaders deal with it quickly and effectively. If pupils are worried about anything, they feel confident to ask an adult in school for help.

Pupils are excited by the wide range of clubs on offer here such as chess, football, computing and film club. They also enjoy opportunities to go outdoors, learning about nature and survival skills such as outdoor cooking. Many pupils benefit from taking on leadership roles. They are proud of the positive difference they make to their school community through groups such as the eco-council or by training as anti-bullying ambassadors.

Parents are incredibly supportive of this school. One parent reflected the views of many by telling the inspectors, 'I've always been very happy with how the children are treated - with respect, support and with the expectation that they will take the opportunity to be the best that they can be.'

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

Leaders, supported by the multi-academy trust (MAT), are highly ambitious for this school and its pupils. They have made recent improvements to all areas of the school and continue to seek ways to develop further. They know their school well and have rightly prioritised those areas which have the greatest impact on pupils' experiences and outcomes.

The school's curriculum is most successful in reading, mathematics and science, where pupils learn consistently well. Leaders have also ensured that there is a well-planned curriculum in most foundation subjects. They have thought about what pupils should learn and in what order. Most of the time, the work pupils are given builds on what they already know. However, this is not always the case and, occasionally, the activities chosen for pupils are less effective because they do not build on pupils' previous learning. In addition, there are a few foundation subjects where leaders have not identified precisely what they want pupils to remember over time. The curriculum is particularly well designed in the early years, where careful thought goes into every learning activity to ensure it is purposeful.

Pupils' individual needs are at the heart of every decision that leaders make. For example, when pupils struggle with reading, leaders use detailed assessment to understand why, before deciding what will help most. If a pupil needs support to improve their behaviour, leaders put in place personalised advice so that teachers

know exactly how to help. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly, often in the early years, and high-quality support is put in place. Sometimes, this involves teaching assistants, who benefit from extensive training to make sure that they are experts in working with pupils with SEND.

Leaders have successfully established a respectful and calm community where pupils can focus on their learning. Lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour, because any incidents are managed quickly and effectively by teachers. Strong routines are built from the early years, where pupils are taught to be attentive and to participate enthusiastically in their learning.

Leaders recognise the importance of attendance and have worked hard to close attendance gaps for particular groups of pupils. This work has been successful for pupils with SEND. Leaders have identified that they still need to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so that they do not miss out on important learning.

Pupils' personal and character development is a priority here. The curriculum in personal, social, health and economic education provides pupils with a broad understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils find this work particularly memorable because it is linked to their regular assemblies. Pupils learn about the importance of diversity and equality, many commenting that this is a strength of their school community.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors share in leaders' ambition and vision for the future. Along with leaders, governors consider staff workload and well-being. They make sure that this is taken into account when making changes, including to the way teachers use assessment. Alongside the MAT, governors bring substantial expertise to their roles, which they draw on to support and challenge leaders. The extent to which leaders have gained the support and trust of the local community is impressive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders treat safeguarding as a priority here. Staff are trained well and identify concerns proactively. They refer these concerns on to leaders, who act quickly and effectively to put support in place for pupils and families who need it. Often, this involves working with external agencies. Leaders ensure that the necessary checks are carried out on new staff. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, for example they learn about healthy relationships and staying safe online. Governors and the multi-academy trust maintain an appropriate oversight of the arrangements for safeguarding and understand their responsibilities well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, lesson activities in the foundation subjects do not build clearly on what pupils have learned before. Leaders should continue to refine their planning of these subjects and the training they provide to teachers. This will help to ensure that lesson activities are more consistently designed to build on what pupils already know.
- In a few of the foundation subjects, it is not clear precisely what leaders want pupils to know and remember. Sometimes, pupils remember activities in these subjects, but not the intended learning. Leaders should ensure that knowledge is precisely identified within the curriculum for each subject and that teachers build in opportunities to check that this has been learned.
- Some pupils who are disadvantaged do not attend school as often as their peers, or sometimes arrive late. These pupils miss out on important learning. Leaders should continue to focus on attendance and punctuality, to make sure that all pupils attend school as regularly as possible.

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	146815
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10267796
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Jon Gray
Website	www.larkriseprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Larkrise Primary School converted to become an academy in February 2019. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2018, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school's headteacher is new to the school since the last inspection and was appointed by the multi-academy trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with senior staff, including the school's headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, the 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.
- The inspectors also talked to pupils and looked at examples of their work in art and design, Spanish and geography.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the multi-academy trust, trustees and local governing body about their roles.
- The inspectors met with pupils, parents and staff about their views of the school, as well as taking into account their responses to Ofsted's questionnaires.
- The inspectors checked that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective. They met with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinised records of concerns, checked the single central record and had conversations with pupils, staff and governors about this aspect of the school.

Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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