

Inspection of Lings Primary School

Hayeswood Road, Lings, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 8NN

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an inclusive school. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They are particularly determined that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged achieve well.

Pupils are happy coming to school. They appreciate and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer. Leaders ensure that there are a range of activities to enrich pupils' lives. One pupil reflected: 'If wasn't for the school I would never have wanted to dance!' Pupils learn about the significance of British values. Visits to places such as the Houses of Parliament help pupils to develop an understanding of democracy and citizenship. The school celebrates the broad cultural heritage of its locality. One parent typically stated: 'There is a lovely warm welcome every day at Lings. It is definitely a community school.'

Pupils behave well. They are respectful of each other. They know the importance of 'doing the right thing'. Pupils have high expectations of themselves. One pupil quoted the school motto, 'Set the standard', indicating the significance it held for them. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils know that staff will deal with bullying.

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

Leaders place the importance of learning to read and enjoyment of books at the heart of their curriculum. Leaders select reading books to enrich the teaching of curriculum subjects. Teachers challenge pupils to read a wide variety of books. Pupils state that they enjoy hearing teachers read to them and that they 'bring books to life'. Leaders ensure that pupils learn to read as soon as they start in the early years foundation stage (EYFS). There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Teachers support pupils if they fall behind. Appropriate support ensures that they catch up. If pupils enter the school with little spoken English, teachers provide rapid support to enable them to communicate and be able to read.

There is a well-constructed and ambitious curriculum. Curriculum plans make it clear the order in which pupils should learn content. In a few subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils need to know and remember has not been identified. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. This is because leaders provide focused training. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. Leaders ensure that teachers have the appropriate resources to support pupils when learning subjects. Pupils access these resources independently. Senior leaders ensure subject leaders have received training to improve their subjects. Nevertheless, in a few subjects, subject leaders are not checking on the implementation of the curriculum closely enough, thus limiting their ability to improve provision in their area of responsibility.

Children in EYFS settle well. Teachers set clear expectations for how children should behave. Staff model these expectations, particularly in pronunciation and listening to

others. There is an excited yet focused atmosphere in this part of the school. All staff know what children should learn. Staff check regularly what children know and remember. 'Star activities' help to address any gaps in children's knowledge that may have emerged. Leaders create clear connections across different elements of the curriculum. For example, carefully chosen books help children to begin to understand the link between healthy diets and that food comes from plants. Children work collaboratively and they clearly enjoy doing so. For instance, a number of children sat patiently while another shared with them their learning in phonics. Children make a strong start in EYFS.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Curriculum plans clearly set out for staff what these pupils' needs are. Regular training provides staff with the expertise they need to ensure that these pupils achieve well.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. There is a calm yet happy feel around school. Expectations are high for pupils' behaviour and routines are well established. There is little low-level disruption. Should it occur, staff deal with it. Pupils are courteous to one another. Relationships between pupils and staff are equally strong. While some pupils do not attend school as often as they should, leaders do all they can to encourage them to attend regularly.

Pupils learn the importance of equality and diversity. They have a strong sense of moral purpose. For example, one pupil stated when explaining discrimination: 'It is not okay to discriminate against people for who they are or what they believe in.' Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. 'Junior wardens' help to keep the community free from litter and 'young leaders' create games for others at playtime.

Governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities and undertake them diligently. Leaders at all levels endeavour to reduce staff workload. Staff feel cared for. A common view described by one member of staff is: 'We are a real team, and everyone looks out for each other'. Leaders have been well supported by the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture for safeguarding is strong. Staff recognise the signs of potential harm. They understand the importance of sharing information if they have concerns. Systems for reporting and recording concerns are rigorous and robust. The members of the safeguarding team regularly review these records. They seek external support where necessary. The team challenges agencies to ensure families get the right support. Leaders make sure only appropriate adults work in the school.

Pupils feel safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. If worried, pupils know of a trusted adult to go to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have designed a well-structured and ambitious curriculum. However, in a few subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils need to know and remember has not been identified. Consequently, teachers cannot check on what pupils have learned as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the key knowledge is identified in all subjects so teachers can check on what pupils understand and remember.
- In a few subjects, subject leaders are not checking on the implementation of the curriculum. As a consequence, there are inconsistencies in a few subjects, which have an impact on what pupils can do, learn and remember. On a few occasions, the intended curriculum is not being delivered to its full extent. Senior leaders should make sure that subject leaders have the time to check precisely how the intended curriculum is being delivered and that it is having the maximum impact.

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	138955
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10267941
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeremy Stockdale
Headteacher	Mark Wilson
Website	www.lings-primary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Northampton Primary Academy Trust.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider and one unregistered alternative provider.

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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: reading, mathematics, science, computing and physical education. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with

teachers and pupils. They also looked at curriculum documentation and pupils' work in history.

- The lead inspector met with two members of the local governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met with three members of the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and Ofsted's staff surveys. An inspector spoke informally to parents outside the school. Inspectors also sought the views of pupils through discussions.
- Records of attendance, behaviour and safeguarding were scrutinised. These included the school's single central record. Inspectors also conducted meetings with leaders to discuss the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Lowther

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Rebecca Jackson

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