

Inspection of a good school: Leiston Primary School

King George's Avenue, Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4JQ

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 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?

Pupils are happy and enjoy school. However, they do not achieve as well as they could across the full range of subjects that they study. This is because pupils do not benefit from a curriculum that is consistently well planned in each subject. This means they are not as well prepared as they should be for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to the life of the school as members of the learning council. Pupils are active members of their local community. They take part in events, such as reading at a local nursing home and raising money for charities. Pupils value the opportunities they have to extend their experience through well-planned trips and visits.

Pupils listen carefully to adults and are respectful towards others. In the classroom and at breaktimes, they behave well. Pupils know how important it is to 'treat others the way that they would like to be treated', and they do. They say that potential bullying is quickly sorted out by adults in school. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult they can talk who will follow up any worries or concerns they may have.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils experience a broad curriculum. In some subjects, curriculum plans clearly set out what pupils need to learn from Reception to Year 6. Teachers plan lessons that help pupils to build on what they have learned before. In these subjects, teachers use assessment well to find out what pupils know and understand. They use this information to help pupils fill any gaps in their learning and deepen their knowledge. In some subjects, the curriculum is less well developed. Leaders have not set out as clearly the important knowledge that pupils should learn. In these subjects, teachers do not plan lessons that build on what pupils already know and can do. In these subjects,

pupils find it difficult to make links in their learning. They do not secure the detailed knowledge that will help them to achieve as well as they could.

Leaders have introduced a programme for the systematic teaching of phonics and spelling from the early years to Year 6. This programme clearly sets out the phonics knowledge that pupils should secure each term. Staff have received training to teach the programme. However, leaders have not ensured that the programme is being implemented consistently well. Some pupils do not get the practise they need to apply their phonics knowledge and develop their reading fluency. Pupils who are not yet confident and fluent readers are given extra reading sessions to help them catch up. Leaders are aware that these sessions are not yet as effective as they should be because the expectations of adults are not high enough to help pupils secure and apply their phonics knowledge, so that they do become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders have developed the reading curriculum. Adults model reading aloud effectively through daily class readers. Books are well chosen to extend pupils' reading experience. Older pupils enjoy reading and can talk confidently about books they have read.

Children in the early years make a positive start to their education. Teachers carefully plan opportunities for children to explore and learn, on their own and with an adult. These help them to successfully develop their spoken language and foundational mathematical skills, such as knowing the names of shapes and being able to count with confidence.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified at an early stage. Adults draw on a range of effective strategies to support pupils in the classroom. In subjects where the curriculum is further developed, teachers adapt the curriculum well so that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. In these subjects, all pupils achieve well.

The curriculum and wider opportunities support pupils' personal development well. Pupils deepen their knowledge of different cultures and religions through the religious education curriculum and assemblies. For example, they learn about music from a different culture every week in assemblies and take part in local music festivals. Pupils learn about the importance of exercise to maintain their physical and mental health through swimming and yoga.

Staff feel well supported in their role. They appreciate how well leaders consider the impact on staff workload and well-being when they review school policies and procedures.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training, so they know what kind of risks that the pupils may face in the local area. If staff have any concerns about a pupil, these are promptly reported and shared with leaders using the online system. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable families can access the help they need. Governors regularly

check that safeguarding arrangements are robust. They ensure that all required checks are carried out before a new member of staff is appointed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in the community and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the programme for phonics and early reading is being taught as leaders intend. Some pupils are not learning to read as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the guidance and support they need to implement the phonics and early reading programme consistently well, so that pupils become confident and fluent readers at an early stage.
- In some subjects, leaders have not clearly set out the important knowledge that pupils should learn. Teachers do not have the information they need to plan lessons effectively. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans provide staff with the information they need to plan sequences of lessons that help pupils to build on what they have learned before and gain the knowledge they need to achieve well.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November and December 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	141554
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10268635
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	376
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeremy Mead
Headteacher	Melissa Geater
Website	www.leistonprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November and 1 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leiston Primary School is part of the Avocet Academy Trust, which consists of five primary schools.
- Leiston Primary School joined the trust in November 2014.
- The school makes use of a registered alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders and the safeguarding and attendance officer.

- The inspector met with the chair of trustees, the chief executive officer, the chair of the local advisory board, who is also a trustee, and two members of the local advisory board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, considered curriculum plans, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' books, and met with class teachers and teaching assistants. The inspector also observed pupils reading.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the arrangements that are in place to support safeguarding. The inspector scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks and the school's safeguarding records.
- The inspector reviewed the school's behaviour records, including records of incidents of bullying and how these are followed up, and records of suspensions.
- A range of other information and documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including information available on the school's website, school policies and information about the curriculum.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector considered the 35 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 21 free-text comments. The inspector took account of the 29 responses to the staff survey. The inspector spoke with pupils to gather their views on the school and took account of the 24 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Heather Hann, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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