

Inspection of Lancaster Steiner School

Lune Road, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 5QU

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this nurturing school environment. This is a happy school. Pupils are articulate and spoke about the importance of the positive relationships that they have with staff.

Pupils value the support that staff give them for their emotional well-being. Leaders are quick to deal with any incidents of unkind behaviour or bullying. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations of their behaviour and achievement. Pupils are inquisitive and resilient learners. They are eager to learn and contribute enthusiastically to lessons. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in the school's specialist curriculum.

Leaders provide a broad range of experiences to support pupils to develop their individuality and confidence. Pupils' wider personal development is enhanced through their learning in the outdoor learning environment. Pupils delight in the time that they spend outside. They told inspectors that they particularly enjoy the opportunities that they have to work on the school allotment and prepare for the Steiner Olympics.

Pupils are confident and self-assured because they know that their views are important to staff and that their voices will be heard. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

The school uses the Steiner Waldorf Fellowship's curriculum as a base from which to build the learning opportunities for pupils. Leaders and trustees have brought about transformative improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils receive a high-quality education. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, which builds logically to Year 6 and prepares pupils well for their next steps.

In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this should be taught. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to make frequent checks on what pupils know and remember. They use this information skilfully to address any gaps or misconceptions that pupils have about their learning.

In a small number of subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as well developed. Leaders are still in the process of defining the essential knowledge that pupils require for subsequent learning. As a result, sometimes teachers are not as clear as they should be about what pupils should know. This hinders how deeply some pupils learn in these subjects.

Leaders have introduced a phonics reading scheme to further support their existing strategies to teach pupils to read. Staff are skilled in the delivery of the scheme. Throughout the school, pupils read widely and often. They particularly enjoy story time with their teachers. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to practise their reading. This helps them to read fluently. Pupils have access to a broad range of texts from a variety of different authors.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of pupils' needs. They quickly identify pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that these pupils learn well alongside their peers. A small number of pupils who need extra help benefit from well-thought-out individual support. This helps them to achieve well.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions conscientiously. Clear routines, positive relationships and the fair application of the behaviour policy mean that school is a calm place where pupils can learn without distraction.

Leaders have designed high-quality opportunities to support pupils' wider development. Pupils understand and respect that people have different families and religions. They are tolerant and accepting. Pupils also value learning about, and debating, a wide range of issues. Leaders also provide an extensive array of opportunities for pupils to develop new interests, such as knitting or gardening.

Staff morale is high. Leaders consider workload and staff well-being when making decisions about the school. Staff know that they could speak to any school leader if they had any concerns.

The board of trustees know the school well. They play an active part in school life. Trustees and leaders engage well with staff. They ensure that staff's workload and well-being are given due regard. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

The proprietor body and leaders have ensured that the school complies with the independent school standards (the standards). The school also complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and trustees are well trained in safeguarding processes. They can recognise the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Staff know what processes to follow when they have concerns about a pupil's well-being, and they raise these concerns quickly with leaders. In turn, leaders respond appropriately to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. For example, leaders work closely with external agencies to secure support for vulnerable pupils when necessary.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online and in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders are still developing the curriculum and identifying the key knowledge that pupils need to know. In these subjects, pupils do not access the depth of learning that they could. They have some gaps in their learning as a result. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking in these remaining subjects. This is so that teachers are clear about what content to teach and when it should be taught.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	132095
DfE registration number	888/6040
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10267622
Type of school	Steiner
School Category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Lancaster Steiner School
Chair	Nina Moeller
Headteacher	Kathryn Flasby
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4860 to £6670
Telephone number	01524 381876
Website	https://lancastersteinerschool.org/
Email address	ola@lancastersteinerschool.org
Date of previous inspection	13 to 15 July 2021

Information about this school

- The school follows the philosophy and methodology of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.
- The legal proprietor of the school is the board of trustees of the Lancaster Steiner School. The board of trustees also provides governance for the school.
- The school has a flat structure with three members of staff sharing responsibility for leadership in the school.
- The previous standard inspection was on 13 to 15 July 2021.
- The school is located on Lune Road, Lancaster LA1 5QU
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and a wide range of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation. This included information relating to the standards, the school's curriculum, leaders' improvement priorities, leaders' approach to safeguarding pupils and the checks that leaders carry out on newly appointed staff. Inspectors also spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The lead inspector also spoke with some parents and carers to gather their views.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff survey. However, inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. However, inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime, in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and the

creative and aesthetic curriculum. They met subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. They also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents and information relating to the standards. She also made a tour of the school premises.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dympna Woods

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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