

Inspection of a good school: Lavington School

The Spring, Market Lavington, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 4EB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Outcome

Lavington School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They like attending and describe it as a happy place. They enjoy their learning. Many pupils describe learning as 'fun'. Pupils value their teachers and say how much they help them to learn. There is a calm, orderly and friendly atmosphere in classrooms and around the school.

Pupils behave well and this supports good learning. They are taught to be kind to others. They say that bullying hardly ever happens. Pupils trust staff and know that they would work to quickly resolve any issues.

Pupils particularly enjoy the many extra-curricular activities available at breaks and lunchtimes. There are opportunities for pupils who share interests and faiths to come together. Pupils take part in residential trips, enrichment day trips and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. These are all popular enrichment activities that develop pupils' leadership skills. This is evident in pupils' increasing confidence. For example, in the girls' forum 'Bold Voices'.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders are reflective. They review their subjects' strengths and areas for improvement to develop their curriculum. The curriculum provides all pupils with a wide range and depth of knowledge. For example, pupils study a breadth of demanding and diverse texts in English.

Leaders plan training for staff effectively. This deepens their subject knowledge and expertise. Leaders support staff to develop effective approaches to help pupils to learn. Teachers are passionate about their subjects. They have high expectations of pupils. They build strong relationships with pupils, who make good progress.

Teachers use assessment effectively to check learning. They ask challenging questions and probe pupils' knowledge and understanding. This enables them to know what pupils

have learnt. It also identifies when pupils have misunderstandings. Staff then use this information to ensure that pupils learn the curriculum. However, this approach is not yet fully established across the curriculum and in some subjects, pupils find it hard to articulate their learning.

Leaders identify pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensure staff are well-informed. Pupils' needs are well met through the curriculum. They are supported effectively by staff who know the curriculum well. This enables staff to provide targeted support for pupils with SEND to learn well.

Since the previous inspection leaders have developed a whole school approach to literacy. This includes reading and oracy. Reading interventions are in place with lower attaining readers. There is a whole school approach to developing vocabulary and reading within subject areas. Pupils' reading is well supported, and they make progress.

Trustees, governors and leaders are ambitious for more pupils to learn the subjects of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) at key stage 4. They are working to ensure that more pupils study a language subject in the future.

Leaders have focused attention upon improving the behaviour of pupils with good effect. As a result, pupils respond well and behave well in their lessons. Staff teach pupils to be tolerant and pupils are kind and show respect to each other. The school's personal development curriculum coordinates all the statutory elements well. The careers programme is of good quality. Work experience is in place for Year 10 pupils to help them to develop an understanding of the workplace. The curriculum is under regular review and is well matched to pupils' needs.

Trustees, governors and leaders are very mindful of the workload of staff. Staff feel well supported and that leaders are considerate of their needs.

Trustees and governors are ambitious for the school. They are knowledgeable and carry out their responsibilities with a high degree of care and attention to detail. As a result, they are able to challenge and support the school's leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to identify and respond to concerns. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school and leaders work very closely with a wide range of external experts. This ensures that leaders have the knowledge and skills to maintain a robust approach to safeguarding. Pupils quickly receive any help that they might need. They say that they feel safe in the school.

Governors and leaders carry out all the necessary checks to ensure that they appoint staff suitable to work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, assessment is not always used effectively to identify pupils' misconceptions. Leaders should help staff to use assessment information so that it has greater impact. This will help pupils to learn the curriculum more successfully in these areas.

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 July 2014.

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	136389
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10268668
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	860
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Roger Townsend
Headteacher	Ralph Plummer
Website	www.lavington.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Lavington School is a smaller than average sized secondary school. It is part of the EQUA Multi Academy Trust.
- The school makes use of a number of alternative providers for a small number of its pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics science and drama. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.

- Inspectors met with curriculum leaders and looked more widely at documentation and visited other subject areas.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- Inspectors examined the school's arrangements for safeguarding by meeting with the designated leads for safeguarding. They also scrutinised policies, procedures and record-keeping and reviewed the safeguarding checks made on staff when they are recruited.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils around the school site and held meetings with girls and mixed groups of pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including policies and record keeping for behaviour management, exclusions, and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at information published on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online inspection questionnaire, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Malcolm Willis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Will Morgan

Ofsted Inspector

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