

# Inspection of Lowdham CofE Primary School

Main Street, Lowdham, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG14 7BE

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since November 2011.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Lowdham CofE Primary School provides a joyful learning environment. Pupils express an enormous sense of pride that they are part of such a happy and caring school. They make positive contributions to the success of the school. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and support others to be the best that they can be. Pupils live out the school's motto to, 'shine like stars'.

Leaders have the highest expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils value their learning. They work hard in lessons. The work they produce across the curriculum is impressive. Leaders also have a clear vision for the character they want pupils to develop. This is underpinned by the values of the school. Pupils learn to love others, join in, do their best, reach out and never give up.

Relationships between adults and pupils are based on trust and respect. Kindness is at the heart of the school's work. Every pupil is known as an individual. Adults notice when pupils are upset and provide the help they need. Pupils also look out for each other.

Parents speak highly of the school. Many reference the exceptional care, compassion and support their children receive.

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

Leaders have designed a highly effective curriculum. Curriculum plans map out what pupils need to know and remember in all subjects, and in all year groups. The curriculum is securely and consistently embedded across the school. Leaders have forensically planned the order in which knowledge is taught. Pupils' knowledge is built up in a logical sequence of lessons, and over time. For example, in geography, Year 4 pupils learn to identify symbols used on maps. In Year 6, they use this knowledge to compare land use on maps of their village now, and in the past. Pupils' work demonstrates the depth of knowledge they acquire, whether that be written work, practical work such as making cookies for a target audience, or a piece of artwork.

Right from the start of school, the early years curriculum engages children in their learning. Each activity that children complete has a clear purpose and supports them to add to their knowledge. As children make a 3D solar system, they apply their knowledge of the planets, practise their fine motor skills and develop their social skills as they help each other. As a result of this thoughtfully designed curriculum, they are very well prepared for the transition to Year 1.

Teachers deliver the intended curriculum with skill. They receive additional training to ensure that their own subject knowledge is strong. They promote the importance of pupils developing an understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. They routinely

check that pupils remember the intended learning and step in to support pupils if they find a new concept difficult.

Reading is prioritised. Staff are experts in the teaching of phonics. Pupils quickly learn the sounds they need to know in order to read. Pupils who struggle to read, get extra help. Teachers provide parents with information about how they can help their child to read at home. The use of high-quality texts is central to the English curriculum. Pupils enjoy the books that their teachers read to them. They identify the books they enjoy and choose to read independently. Pupils become accomplished readers.

The school is highly inclusive. Leaders make every effort to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum, and wider opportunities, as their peers. They do not place a ceiling on what pupils can achieve with the right support. Pupils with SEND flourish.

Pupils show high levels of maturity. They enjoy the wide range of opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. Year 1 pupils are 'weather watchers', a school council represents the voice of pupils and Year 6 pupils lead assemblies about the people who inspire them. Pupils learn to debate ensuring that they listen with respect to the views of others. They absolutely accept difference. They value being unique. Older pupils know the dangers associated with peer pressure. Pupils celebrate the success of others. For example, they show their appreciation as pupils play the piano when they arrive in the hall.

Leaders have created a strong sense of teamwork in the school. Staff support one another. They say that leaders appreciate their hard work and trust them to do their very best for every pupil.

Governors have played an important role in school improvement. Alongside leaders, they have worked with determination to establish an outstanding learning environment for all.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff keep a watchful eye on pupils' safety and well-being. They receive regular training so that they can identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They share their concerns promptly. They know that even the smallest of concerns could provide vital information about a pupil. Staff work on the principle that, 'it could happen here'. Designated safeguarding leaders keep thorough records. They draw on the advice and support of external agencies at the right times.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They know that they should seek the help of a trusted adult if they have a worry.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122806
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10298362
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Emma Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ben Waldram
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lowdhamprimaryschool.co.uk">www.lowdhamprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 November 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school belongs to the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2016. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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 headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. An inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leaders to review their knowledge, records and actions. An inspector reviewed the single central record.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons, around the school and at social times.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of the views of parents and staff through conversations and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Di Mullan

His Majesty's Inspector

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