

Inspection of Little Parndon Primary Academy

Park Mead, Harlow, Essex CM20 1PU

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils look forward to coming to school. They want to learn and focus on doing their best. However, rules, routines and high expectations are not consistently established at this school. As a result, sometimes pupils distract one another in lessons, or do not listen to their teachers.

Pupils feel safe. They know how to stay safe online. They know who they can talk to if they have a worry. Bullying does happen but staff deal with it appropriately. However, unkind behaviour from some pupils does happen and sometimes this behaviour reoccurs. Pupils make good use of the learning mentor within the school if they have worries. They use lunchtime clubs to help manage their emotions. Pupils keep active with a range of activities organised during playtimes and lunchtimes.

Pupils do not always make the academic progress that they should. This is because the curriculum, teaching and activities do not consistently help pupils to learn and remember more.

Pupils can take on a range of leadership opportunities such as 'digital leaders.' They enjoy the clubs on offer such as dance and colouring club. Pupils look forward to the school trips.

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

The quality of education across the school is variable. This is because, over time, leaders and the trust have not sufficiently developed the curriculum. Some curriculum plans lack ambition and do not set out clearly what pupils will learn and do. For some subjects, leaders have set out a well-ordered curriculum of what pupils should learn but this is not consistent. Many teachers have not received enough support and training to lead or teach subjects well. Current leaders have identified these weaknesses quickly and are setting about addressing them.

Teachers do not always know what they must teach or how to best help pupils understand new knowledge. This means that, in some subjects, pupils do not make connections with what they have learned before. They also have gaps in knowledge. As a result, pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage in learning as they should be. In subjects where teachers have stronger subject knowledge, the curriculum is better developed and there is more of a focus on how pupils will develop skills and knowledge over time.

Leaders have recently introduced a new early reading programme. It helps pupils to learn how to read step-by-step. The books pupils read match the sounds they have learned in class. This helps pupils to practise reading unfamiliar words accurately using their phonics knowledge. Leaders have provided training for some staff, but not all. As a result, pupils' misconceptions often go unnoticed. Older pupils who are

still learning to read do not have books that match their reading stage. Pupils begin reading lessons as soon as they join the school. However, by the end of Reception year, many have already fallen behind where leaders expect them to be.

Children in Reception lack plentiful opportunities to learn how to communicate or make friends. Staff do not know how best to support some aspects of children's development. Many of the activities do not help children to learn new knowledge and skills. Children's unfriendly and overly boisterous behaviour is not routinely noticed or corrected. This does not help children develop the attitudes that enable them to successfully play and learn with others.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) do not always get the help they need to access learning. Some staff do not have the information they need to understand pupils' needs effectively, particularly if these are more complex. As a result, staff do not always provide pupils with SEND suitable support to help them learn as well as their peers.

Pupils know what 'kind and caring' should look like. However, leaders have not ensured that all pupils learn and follow the rules, routines and expectations that help them to be kind and behave well. Most pupils are respectful towards adults and follow instructions. Some pupils often distract others in lessons. They sometimes do not complete work set for them. This makes it difficult for some other pupils to learn, particularly pupils with SEND.

Most pupils enjoy the range of after-school clubs on offer. The clubs help them to try new things. For example, being part of a rock band. Pupils who take on leadership roles are keen to have more responsibility. The learning mentor helps pupils to understand their school experiences.

Trust leaders have not sufficiently prioritised the needs of pupils, staff and school leaders. As a result, weaknesses in the curriculum have not been addressed until recently. Staff have not always had the support and knowledge of how to help pupils develop, learn and behave well. The trustees and school governors know the school priorities. They are supporting leaders with the rapid improvement plan.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have trained staff and provide regular updates about safeguarding. Staff know the signs of harm. They are aware of local school issues. Staff identify concerns and report them using school systems. Leaders take action to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need to stay safe.

Pupils make use of the pastoral support that leaders have put in place, including worry boxes and a learning mentor. This means that pupils are confident to share their worries and concerns when needed. They trust adults to keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum, including in the early years, has not been fully developed. It does not sufficiently set out, in a logical order, what pupils will learn. Staff lack knowledge about how to teach some subjects well. As a result, pupils have gaps in their learning and cannot recall what they have learned in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum clearly defines content, knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to teach the full range of subjects in the curriculum effectively.
- Subject and phase leaders lack the support and knowledge required to lead their subjects well. As a result, expectations for pupils in some subjects are low and pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the guidance and expertise to lead and evaluate their areas of responsibility effectively.
- Staff lack knowledge about how to support some pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils are not getting the support they need. Leaders should ensure that all staff know how to support the learning of pupils with SEND and meet their needs effectively.
- Staff in the early years lack knowledge about how best to support children's social, emotional and language development. As a result, children miss out on vital opportunities to learn how to communicate, make friends and behave well. Leaders should train staff in how to support children's development of social and communication skills.
- Leaders have not ensured that rules, routines and expectations for pupils' behaviour in class are followed consistently and understood by all. As a result, disruption to learning and unkind behaviour are not always addressed effectively. Leaders should ensure that expectations of behaviour are communicated and understood by all. They should support staff to apply these consistently to help all pupils develop positive attitudes towards learning.

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	140019
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10268049
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Drayton
Headteacher	Luke Wildig
Website	www.littleparndonacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been recently appointed and had been in post for seven weeks at the time of this inspection.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative provisions.
- There is a breakfast club that is run by the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, French and Geography. For each deep dive,

inspectors discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at other curriculum plans, including PSHE and English.

- The inspectors met with trust leaders, the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors met with the safeguarding lead, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector also reviewed the school's records of safeguarding concerns and recruitment checks.
- To evaluate aspects of the school and leaders' work, the lead inspector met with governors and a local authority improvement partner.
- The inspectors looked at the schools' records of behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the 42 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, all of which included free text responses. The lead inspector took account of the 34 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. To gather pupils' views, inspectors observed and spoke with pupils, including at breaktimes.

Inspection team

Nerrissa Bear, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Laura Hewer

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Stanton

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023