

Inspection of a good school: Long Meadow School

Garthwaite Crescent, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK5 7XX

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

Long Meadow School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are '#Proud' to attend this lively school. They relish the numerous opportunities to develop their character and grow to be confident young people, for example by attending the various sporting and music clubs run by the school. Everyone values being part of the local community. Pupils visit the local retirement village to play games with the residents. Pupils also benefit from various trips and visits, including to museums and outdoor activity centres. Pupils in Year 2 look forward to a 'night under the stars' on the school field.

Warm, trusting relationships between pupils and staff ensure that pupils feel safe and happy. Staff help pupils to talk about their feelings. This helps pupils to recognise if they feel anxious or unhappy, and to manage those feelings well.

Pupils behave very well in and out of lessons. Playtimes are exciting as staff lead pupils in playground games. Pupils are kind to each other. For example, trained 'well-being champions' look out for each other on the playground and play with anyone who might be feeling lonely.

Pupils' outcomes are rising because the school has raised expectations of what pupils can achieve. Improvements to the curriculum and teaching are helping pupils to learn more and remember more over time.

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

Leaders and staff have worked hard to design a broad, ambitious and well-organised curriculum. In most subjects, leaders have identified the core knowledge they want pupils to learn. Learning builds logically from when pupils start in the early years to when they leave at the end of key stage 2. This more organised approach is helping pupils to build their knowledge over time, as they make links to what they have previously learned.

In subjects where the curriculum reorganisation is further ahead, pupils are achieving well. A more systematic approach to teaching phonics is making a big difference to pupils'

outcomes in reading by the end of key stage 1. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics have improved to be in line with national averages by the end of key stage 2. Pupils' achievement in science is also notably stronger than in the past. Pupils' knowledge is improving in other subjects, too, but is less secure where the curriculum is yet to be refined and embedded.

Senior leaders have inspired and empowered subject leaders to make sure the curriculum is taught well. Staff work collaboratively to ensure that everyone has strong subject knowledge about what they are teaching. Teachers pitch learning at just the right level for pupils. A new, common approach to checking what pupils have learned is helping teachers to skilfully adapt activities so that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. A strong focus on subject-specific vocabulary is helping all pupils, and especially pupils who speak English as an additional language, to learn well.

Pupils enjoy a range of trips and visits that increase their understanding of the curriculum. In addition, pupils can engage in wider experiences that help to develop character. Bespoke extra help for the most vulnerable pupils, especially those with SEND, is extremely well planned to help pupils understand fundamental British values and to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils like taking on extra responsibilities, such as helping in the library, writing the newsletter and sitting on the school council.

The school has high expectations of pupils' attendance. Nearly all pupils attend school regularly and very few are persistently absent. Leaders' analysis enables them to tackle the reasons for pupils' absence. The school works hard to promote good attendance, including helping parents understand the rules around term-time holidays. In particular, the school helps pupils who struggle to come to school because of mental health needs to attend more often.

Staff feel very well supported. They say that leaders regularly take account of their workload and their well-being. Several staff said that the school is like a family. Leaders, including the governing body, know the school very well. They have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for further development. Many staff and parents told the inspector that they valued leaders' caring approach, particularly during the pandemic.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Improvements to the curriculum in some foundation subjects are recent. Sometimes, the concepts and knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn are too broad. As a result, pupils' knowledge in these subjects is not as deep as it is in others. The school needs to review or refine the curriculum in some subjects to ensure that pupils have the same depth of knowledge in all subjects.

- The school has recently implemented new procedures for teachers to check pupils' learning. This is starting to help the school to identify what pupils have and have not learned, and to adapt what they teach next in response. The school needs to embed these new procedures so that pupils learn more over time.

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 January 2015.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	132787
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10296343
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Bond
Headteacher	Philip Gray
Website	www.longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- No relevant changes since the previous inspection.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the chair of the governing body and other governors to discuss the leadership and provision in the school. The inspector also held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about

their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and listened to pupils in key stage 1 reading to an adult.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of the school's documentation and met with groups of pupils and staff to discuss their experiences and views of the school.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime.
- The responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, were considered, as were responses to the confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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