

Inspection of LIPA Primary and High School

Upper Duke Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 7BT

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteachers of this school are Holly Lucas and Andrew Raven. This school is part of The LIPA Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the executive headteacher and accounting officer, Greg Parker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sean McNamara.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate the unique and ambitious setting of LIPA Primary and High School. Staff know pupils and their families well. Many pupils are happy at school. Typically, there are positive relationships between staff and pupils.

The school has increasingly high expectations for pupils' behaviour, attendance and academic achievement. Most pupils attend school regularly, and they enjoy their lessons. In most subjects, pupils, particularly those in the primary age phase, achieve well.

During lessons, most pupils follow instructions and focus well on their learning. However, some older pupils do not behave as well as they should. Some pupils told inspectors that they do not feel safe in school. This is because they are worried by the behaviour of some of the other pupils, especially during break times. Added to this, some pupils do not show sufficient respect for their school environment.

Pupils benefit from an array of additional opportunities, with performing arts being central to building pupils' confidence and talents. For example, the school provides support for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds so that they have access to music tuition. In addition, the school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports clubs, art and games.

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

The curriculums in all subjects are ambitious for pupils. In most subjects, the school has thought carefully about the building of knowledge from the early years through to key stage 3. In these subjects, pupils build a secure body of knowledge over time, and there has been an improvement in the attainment of pupils, particularly in key stage 1.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and for the most part, they explain concepts to pupils well. Teachers benefit from effective training, which has strengthened their delivery of the curriculum. Activities are carefully designed by teachers to enable pupils to build their knowledge well over time. Typically, this helps pupils to learn well.

In the main, teachers check what pupils know and remember, and they address misconceptions as they occur. However, in a small number of subjects, the school's assessment processes do not enable pupils to demonstrate the knowledge that they have learned sufficiently well. From time to time, pupils' learning is uneven. For example, on occasion, some pupils who find writing difficult are not able to complete the written assessments expected of them. This hinders these pupils from demonstrating fully what they have learned. As a result, teachers are not clear whether these pupils have any gaps in their subject knowledge.

Reading is a priority for all children as they begin the Reception Year. Staff implement the phonics programme consistently well, and pupils are confident in the letters and sounds that they have learned. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading enjoy the books that they read. Skilled staff identify and support those pupils who find reading more difficult, or who have gaps in their reading knowledge, to catch up with their peers.

The school's reading strategy also benefits older pupils; for example, teachers lead whole-class reading during form time. Pupils have access to an online library as part of a strategy to encourage them to read more widely beyond their lessons.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Pupils with SEND access the same broad curriculum as their classmates. The school has recently improved the quality of the information that staff receive about pupils' individual needs. This is enabling staff to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can learn well.

The school has thought carefully about pupils' personal development. For example, pupils build age-appropriate knowledge of healthy relationships, keeping safe online and the differences between people. A range of exciting visits build on the learning that pupils develop in their subject curriculums. Some pupils take on positions of responsibility, for example acting as reading buddies on World Book Day.

The school has recently updated the behaviour policy to reflect its increased expectations. However, the new behaviour policy is not applied consistently well by staff. Pupils and staff reported varying experiences of behaviour between different year groups, especially outside of lesson times. Added to this, the school does not have a clear enough understanding of the impact of its work to improve pupils' behaviour across the school.

Some older pupils do not share the same sense of belonging to the school as their younger peers. This is partly because, until recently, older pupils have not had consistently positive experiences in their school life. Changes in staffing and accommodation have left older pupils feeling, at times, unsettled, and this has contributed to some pupils' poor behaviour. Despite issues with some pupils' behaviour, systems to monitor attendance are effective, and the school implements appropriate actions to support pupils to attend school regularly.

The school has grown at pace. This has resulted in considerable changes to policy and practice, including curriculum design. Some staff reported that their workload is high due to navigating several changes to the school within a relatively short timescale. This has hindered how effectively some of the school's updated policies have been implemented.

Governors and trustees are ambitious for the continued development of the school. They are in the process of refining their roles and responsibilities to increase the effectiveness by which they monitor and evaluate the school. Currently, the schools' perception of the quality of provision, particularly for older pupils, does not match

these pupils' lived experiences. Consequently, some pupils and their parents and carers do not feel adequately listened to. This prevents the school from accurately identifying priorities for further improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school's approaches to assessment do not enable teachers to accurately identify gaps or errors in pupils' learning quickly enough. This means that, from time to time, some pupils continue through the curriculum with unaddressed misconceptions. The school should ensure that, in these subjects, assessment processes support teachers to identify and rectify pupils' misconceptions swiftly.
- Some staff do not implement the schools' updated behaviour policy consistently well. As a result, some pupils do not behave as well as they should in lessons and around the school sites. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to implement the behaviour policy consistently well and that pupils understand the behaviour that is expected of them.
- Some older pupils do not show appropriate levels of respect towards each other or towards the school environment. Consequently, some pupils do not feel as safe and secure at school as they should, especially during break times. The school should ensure that it supports these pupils to improve their behaviour and to fully understand the impact of their actions on others.
- As the school has grown, several updated policies and curriculums have been implemented quickly. This has increased staff's workload and hindered how well some of these updated processes have been implemented. The school should ensure that due regard is given to the impact on staff workload when making changes to policy and practice.
- The school, including trustees, does not have a detailed view of some aspects of its provision. This prevents the school from accurately identifying where improvements are needed and from listening fully to the views of older pupils and their parents. The school should ensure that, as it continues to grow, systems for quality assuring the provision, including responding to the views of stakeholders, are fully effective.

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	141103
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10314041
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	566
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean McNamara
Headteachers	Holly Lucas and Andrew Raven
CEO of the trust	Greg Parker (executive headteacher and accounting officer)
Website	www.lipaprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2017

Information about this school

- The school is part of The LIPA Multi Academy Trust.
- The school opened in 2014 for pupils in the Reception Year only. Each year, the number of pupils on the school roll has increased. From September 2023, the school has had pupils from Reception Year to Year 9 in attendance.
- In November 2023, the school opened an additional site to accommodate pupils in Year 9.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, science, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with one of the headteachers, other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the executive headteacher and accounting officer for the trust, trustees and members of the governing body. They also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Eleanor Overland, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sharon Cowey	Ofsted Inspector
Gil Bourgade	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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