

Inspection of a good school: Long Bennington Church of England Academy

Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5EH

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2024

Outcome

Long Bennington Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is David Nicholson. This school is part of Infinity Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gavin Booth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Lancashire.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this happy and caring school. They understand the importance of working to uphold the school's values of love, joy, respect, resilience, service and justice. They do their best to live up to them and enjoy the rewards they receive when they succeed.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Relationships are respectful and positive. Pupils hold staff in high regard. Pupils enjoy spending time with their friends in the newly designed playground. This is a fun place for pupils to spend time together. However, on occasion, a small number of pupils need to be reminded to play sensibly.

Pupils say they feel safe at school. Typically, they describe it as a 'community' and a 'friendly place to be'. Most pupils are confident to tell an adult if they have a problem and trust that they will be listened to and supported.

Pupils have various opportunities to lead. They take these roles seriously and are proud of them. For example, Year 6 buddies enjoy spending time with younger children and helping to look after them.

A wide range of experiences are available for pupils to enjoy. There are various clubs on offer, in which most pupils take part. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed the recent residential trip to London.

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

Pupils receive a good quality of education at Long Bennington Church of England Academy. The school has designed a strong curriculum in almost all subjects, which meets the needs of all pupils. In most areas of the curriculum, pupils build their knowledge and skills gradually from the early years through to the end of key stage 2. However, the school is aware that it has not precisely identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn in all subjects.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils enjoy reading. They speak enthusiastically about their favourite books and a wide range of authors. Staff have been well trained in how to teach pupils to read. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children begin to learn the sounds that letters make from their first few weeks in school. Staff pay close attention to how well pupils learn the sounds. They provide support when they need to. Adults carefully select pupils' reading books, ensuring that they contain the letter sounds that pupils recognise.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Staff take time to clearly explain and model learning. This helps pupils to grasp new learning quickly. Staff have high expectations of pupils. They encourage pupils to use precise vocabulary to express themselves and explain their thinking. This approach begins in the early years. For example, children can confidently identify and describe different representations of the same number. In art, pupils can confidently explain how they have painted in the style of Kandinsky using shapes such as triangles and circles. In most subjects, staff help pupils to recall prior learning and to connect it to what they are learning now. This helps pupils to understand how their learning develops over time and how new concepts build on things they have previously learned. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, know how their knowledge of times tables helps them to understand fractions and ratio. However, the school has not yet clearly identified the important content to be taught in all subjects. As a result, pupils do not gain the detailed knowledge and skills they require in all areas of the curriculum.

The school has a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff ensure that pupils with SEND receive the extra help that they need so that they can learn the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are well supported to succeed in school.

The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils are knowledgeable about British values and equality. They are proud to be named 'equalisers' when they demonstrate their understanding of protected characteristics and the school's values. Pupils develop a strong understanding of different cultures, beliefs and lifestyles. They are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors and members of the trust check on the work of the school, visiting often to provide challenge and support. They ensure that leaders keep them well informed. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is broad and enriching. However, a small number of curriculum plans do not clearly identify the key knowledge to be taught in all subjects. Consequently, pupils do not gain the detailed knowledge and skills they require in all areas of the curriculum. The school must ensure that it identifies the most important content pupils need to learn in all subjects.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2019.

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	138057
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10339674
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Lancashire
CEO of the trust	Gavin Booth
Headteacher	David Nicholson
Website	www.longbenningtonacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined Infinity Academies Trust in October 2023.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2018. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school does not use any 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, subject leaders, teachers, and leaders with responsibility for behaviour and attendance.

- The inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and two other trust representatives. She also met with the chair of the local governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector also considered pupils' learning in a range of other subjects, including design and technology, physical education, music and modern foreign languages.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also spoke with groups of pupils and staff.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school development plan, documentation relating to behaviour, attendance and governance, as well as information available on the school's website.

Inspection team

Heidi Bastock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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