

# Inspection of Loudwater Combined School

School Way, Kingsmead Road, Loudwater Combined School, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 1JJ

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils are prepared for their next stage of education thoroughly. Staff have very high expectations for pupils' learning, particularly in key stage 2. This helps pupils to achieve successful outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics consistently well. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn the curriculum effectively and are supported expertly.

Pupils are polite and articulate. They move around the school and playground respectfully. Pupils know the school's values such as equality and empathy and how these relate to inspirational figures from the wider world, as well as each other. Pupils have extremely positive and caring relationships. They respond to a strong personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum wonderfully well. Pupils are very happy and learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn to reflect on carefully chosen texts and digital media thoughtfully. Pupils are encouraged to explore questions such as, 'What is this information really telling us?' when they are reading. Pupils written work in books is of a high standard across the curriculum.

From the start of Reception, the school promotes pupils' good attendance robustly. The school establishes a positive and supportive culture which helps pupils to improve their attendance and punctuality increasingly.

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

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils. The school provides thoughtful adaptations to the curriculum for pupils with SEND and works with external specialists to support these pupils, where needed. For example, an excellent early morning programme helps pupils to learn readily. In some subjects, such as Spanish and mathematics, the curriculum is developed systematically and helps pupils to build key knowledge and skills deeply. Where practice is strongest, teachers have adept subject knowledge which helps to implement sequences of lessons securely. In these subjects, this impacts on pupils' learning significantly. Staff check how well pupils have learned the curriculum and provide precise support so that pupils learn successfully. However, in some subjects and subject areas, including in the early years, staff expertise is not as effective. This means that lessons are not always contributing to pupils' learning as successfully as they could. Pupils do not always build on their prior knowledge as strongly as they do in other areas of the curriculum.

Reading is prioritised. Phonics and early reading begins from the start of Reception and all staff are well trained to deliver a robust approach. Reading books are matched closely to the sounds that pupils know. If any pupils fall behind, pre-teaching and further follow-up lessons help them to catch up with their peers quickly. Pupils develop a love of books and are encouraged, as one member of staff described, to 'wonder aloud' in preparation for increasingly academic study as they progress through the curriculum. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on the challenging books that they study. Pupils often link texts to their own experiences, which helps them to

discuss mature concepts such as empathy and supports them with high levels of engagement in their learning.

In the early years, children learn to read systematically. Staff develop children's communication and language through a carefully planned curriculum. However, across some areas of learning in Reception, some activities are not always meaningful enough for children to help them build knowledge and understanding as successfully as they could.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities that help to develop their talents and interests. For example, football, netball and choir are highly valued and well attended. Trips and visits enhance the curriculum, such as a Shakespeare day workshop and residential trip to the Isle of Wight. These experiences help pupils to build confidence and feel very well prepared for their next stage of education. Staff have the highest expectations for pupils' behaviour. Clear systems and approaches ensure that any behaviour incidents are managed swiftly and robustly. Pupils know what is expected of them. They have a positive impact on each other's learning and well-being.

Since the previous inspection, the school has made a number of improvements. Governors play a key role in realising the school's vision and know the school's strengths and areas for development with valuable insight. They engage with staff proficiently and take a proactive approach to supporting staff with workload and well-being. Governors offer robust support and challenge with full understanding of their statutory responsibilities. Safeguarding has been a priority area of the school's improvement work and the school has rightly developed this to be a strength of their current provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, not all staff have the subject expertise they need to deliver the curriculum exceptionally well. As a result, some pupils do not learn as effectively as they could. The school should continue to develop subject knowledge across the staff team, including in the early years, so that all subjects can be implemented in line with where practice is strongest.
- In the early years, some activity choices do not help children learn the intended curriculum as effectively as possible. This means that a small proportion of children are not developing their knowledge and understanding across some areas of learning fully. The school should ensure that staff are supported effectively to design meaningful activities for all children across all areas of 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110524
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296175
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Randall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Cunnington
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.loudwater.bucks.sch.uk">www.loudwater.bucks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school offers a breakfast and after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 COVID19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the staff and the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority and other leaders within the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and Spanish. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed 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, where possible.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority visit reports and behaviour incident logs.

### **Inspection team**

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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