Inspection of Long Mountain CofE Primary School

Worthen, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 9HT

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Requires improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very happy school. Children and pupils feel safe and cared for. They are kind to each other, polite, articulate and confident. On the playground, older pupils take care of younger children as a matter of course. The school's motto of 'let your light shine' is evident, and pupils here celebrate the successes of others as well as their own.

This year, expectations of what all pupils can achieve have been raised significantly, and there are early signs that these are beginning to bear fruit. Pupils enjoy their learning, particularly in those subjects where they are supported to build on what they already know to develop the skills and knowledge they need over time. However, pupils do not make the progress they should in too many other subjects because the learning is not delivered as leaders intend.

Pupils are appreciative of the range of clubs that have been introduced this year to help them develop their interests. They talk excitedly of the activities and visits that they are now able to take part in.

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

The new headteacher has reinvigorated this school. He has put every aspect of school life under a microscope to identify what needs to improve. As a result, the school now has an enriched curriculum, designed to be ambitious for all pupils from Nursery to Year 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school's vision and values start in the early years, and this is reflected in the positive comments made by parents about how well their children are prepared for Reception. Staff know the children well and ensure that the early years curriculum is adapted to meet their interests and needs effectively. As a result, children progress well from their starting points.

Early reading is taught effectively. Nearly all pupils learn to read with fluency and comprehension. Regular assessment ensures that those who may be struggling to keep up are identified quickly and given the help they need. However, occasionally the support provided does not pay enough attention to ensuring that these pupils can understand what they are reading. In these cases, pupils struggle to follow the story so are less positive about the benefits of reading.

This year, reading has been promoted as a key priority with both children and parents effectively. Pupils love to read and have many opportunities to do so. Daily reading in all classes, regular visits to the school library and visits from the mobile library ensure that pupils always have a broad and rich range of books to choose from.

Progress has been made to improve pupils' writing in key stage 1. However, throughout the school, poor handwriting and spelling are hampering pupils' ability to use and understand key vocabulary and to present their ideas with clarity.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. When the subject curriculum is followed as leaders intend, activities are often adapted well to pupils' needs and they make progress. When this is not the case, learning is sometimes disjointed, and pupils struggle to make connections with what they already know. However, regular, ongoing assessment is now identifying gaps in understanding or misconceptions, and the new tracking system is helping leaders to quickly recognise problem spots.

Pupils with SEND are well supported, including in the early years. Systems are in place to ensure rapid identification of need, and this translates into appropriate support and intervention. Teachers have the information they need to adapt their teaching and are increasingly able to do so.

A great deal of work has been done this year to enhance pupils' personal development. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is now well planned and has strong links with academic subjects. Where it is delivered effectively, it helps pupils to understand different relationships and the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. However, not all teachers are delivering these elements of personal development as well or as often as they should, which means some pupils are not being prepared well enough for their next steps. Nonetheless, pupils are well supported to keep safe and healthy both physically and mentally. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe online and of the risks and signs of unsafe activities. Pupils are very well versed in the fundamental British values. They can explain the importance of personal liberty alongside respect and tolerance, linking these to the school's values.

Teachers say that their workload and well-being are taken into account. They feel able to approach leaders if they have a problem.

Communication and engagement with parents have improved significantly. Parents are very positive and appreciative of what has been achieved this year.

The school and its governors are working together effectively. They know what needs to improve and the actions required to achieve that 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 some subjects, teachers are not delivering the curriculum as leaders intend. This means sequences of learning are disjointed, so that pupils do not learn as much as they could. The school should ensure that teachers follow the intended curriculum so that learning is carefully sequenced to support pupils to make the progress they should.
- For a small number of pupils who struggle with reading, additional support lacks attention to comprehension. This means that sometimes pupils can sound out a series of words but they do not understand the meaning of what they have read. The school should ensure that routines include checks for understanding.
- Poor handwriting and spelling are having a detrimental effect on pupils' ability to use and understand subject vocabulary and to present their ideas and opinions with clarity in writing. The school should ensure that these are specifically taught, and that assessment identifies next steps for improvement where necessary.
- Some aspects of personal development are not delivered well enough or frequently enough. In these cases, pupils are not being prepared as well as they should be for their next steps. Leaders should ensure that there is a clear process for monitoring what is taught and when.

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	123518
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10322769
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Stacey
Headteacher	Jon-Anders Rowlands
Website	longmountain.shropshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 January 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Long Mountain CofE Primary School is a voluntary-controlled school with a Christian ethos.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in December 2021. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a new headteacher and a new chair of governors.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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.

- Inspectors discussed any continuing impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector held meetings with the governing body, including the chair of governors, a representative from the local authority and spoke with a representative from the diocese.
- Deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography were completed. These included discussions with subject leaders, staff and pupils, visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also reviewed the written work of pupils in English and the school's PSHE curriculum plans and delivery.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils of all ages, including children in the early years, both formally and informally.
- A range of documentation was reviewed, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school's work and their subsequent plans to improve the school, curriculum plans, policies and the school's website.
- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspectors considered the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe, the checks made to ensure safer recruitment, and the quality of staff training.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Allyson Brown	Ofsted Inspector

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