Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Lonesome Primary School

Grove Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 1SD

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

Lonesome Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for at this school. They are happy and feel safe. Staff at all levels know the pupils very well. The support they provide is carefully tailored to help every pupil feel valued. Pupils are looked after with great care and kindness. They enjoy coming to school because it is a space where they are comfortable and confident to learn and grow.

Pupils choose to work hard and try their best, in and out of lessons. This is in line with the school's high expectations of them. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them promptly. They participate actively in discussions. Pupils achieve well overall, excelling in writing in particular by the end of Year 6.

The school expects pupils to 'listen to all adults, each other and to be always polite'. Pupils adhere to this. They are kind and work well together. Their behaviour contributes to a safe and positive learning environment. This is because the school applies its rules on behaviour consistently and fairly.

Pupils celebrate the diversity in their school. They learn about other people's faiths through assemblies about different religious festivals. The school's motto encourages pupils to 'be different'. They explore the achievements of individuals from different backgrounds and nationalities. These experiences help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

Children receive a good start to their education. As soon as they join the early years, children begin to learn how to read. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme

effectively. They use a wide range of strategies to help pupils know and remember their letter sounds. Pupils apply and practise their phonics knowledge regularly, including by reading books that match their reading levels. Staff use assessment well to identify those who are falling behind the programme. These pupils are supported well and catch up quickly. As a result, most pupils in this school are reading fluently by the end of Year 2.

The school has put in place a well-considered and carefully arranged curriculum. It ensures that pupils are building on prior learning. In mathematics, for example, children in Reception develop a strong understanding of numbers. They can recognise amounts on sight without having to count in ones. This helps them when they tackle more complex calculations in Year 1. Similarly, in French, pupils in Year 3 begin learning individual words and simple phrases. By the time they get to Year 6, pupils are reading and writing paragraphs in French.

Overall, the curriculum is delivered well. Subject matter is presented clearly. For example, pupils are given effective models and explanations to help them understand new concepts. Staff identify and address pupils' misconceptions promptly. They also quickly identify pupils who require additional support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Effective adaptations ensure that pupils with SEND also learn the curriculum well. Sometimes, however, teaching uses resources that contain too much information at once. This makes it harder for pupils to focus on the key concepts and ideas that they are expected to learn and remember.

Pupils perform their leadership responsibilities with care. They represent the school proudly in many activities. These include welcoming and showing visitors around the school. Younger pupils appreciate the work of 'playground peacemakers', who help them resolve minor issues they may have with their peers. Eco-warriors lead projects such as litter-picking and watering the plants in school. These activities help pupils to develop as active and responsible members of the school community.

The school sends a strong message to the school community on the importance of attendance. Pupils attend school regularly. When absence becomes a concern, the school intervenes promptly. The school works closely with parents and carers, as well as outside agencies, to remove any potential barriers to attendance. This is leading to improvements in pupils' rates of attendance.

Leaders and governors have worked closely together to sustain and improve the quality of education that the school provides. Staff are delighted to work in this school. They value the support and the collaboration they receive from leaders and colleagues. They appreciate the way that leaders are approachable and have an open-door policy. Leaders consider the impact of initiatives on staff's workload before implementing them. Shared planning and simplified marking and feedback approaches, for example, are some of the initiatives that leaders have put in place. Staff said that these support their work–life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teaching presents resources that contain too much information, which reduces pupils' focus on the key concepts that need to be learned and understood. This hinders pupils' learning as they need to process excessive content. The school should ensure that teaching choices consistently focus on helping pupils to learn more of the subject content.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in July 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	102636
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10345827
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Stern
Headteacher	Nathalie Bull (Executive Headteacher) Julie Revell (Head of School)
Website	www.bedifferent-federation.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in a hard federation with two other schools in the local authority.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 held discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 considered the views of parents through their responses to Ofsted's survey.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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