

Inspection of Lavendon School

High Street, Lavendon, Olney, Buckinghamshire MK46 4HA

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Lisa Watson. The school is part of Inspiring Futures Through Learning Academy 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), Sarah Bennett, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Marilyn Hubbard.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lavendon School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Lavendon School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils model calm, positive interactions that reflect the school's values wonderfully. Pupils' behaviour is commendable. The school's strong and caring ethos helps pupils to develop kindness and consideration towards each other from the beginning of their time in the early years. Pupils are very happy, and they love coming to school. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online. Pupils know what bullying and cyber-bullying are, and how to get help if issues arise.

The school has high expectations for the achievement of all pupils. The school makes determined efforts for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to get the most out of their time at school. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. These include becoming members of the school council, the 'eco squad' and being 'buddies' to younger pupils. Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities they are given. A range of interesting trips and a broad variety of school clubs, such as sports, music and chess, allow pupils to expand their interests. Pupils learn about the importance of equality and celebrate difference. Consequently, pupils are rightly proud of their school.

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

Reading is prioritised at Lavendon. Staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the phonics programme expertly. This ensures that pupils acquire reading skills quickly. The books that pupils read are matched closely to the sounds that they have learned. Staff check regularly that pupils are on track with their reading. If any pupils fall behind, they receive the support they need to become fluent and confident readers. Staff use ambitious texts to help build pupils' confidence and vocabulary. As a result, pupils talk about their reading with enthusiasm.

The school's curriculum is well designed to enable pupils to gain the knowledge and skills they need in each subject. The school has identified what needs to be taught in a logical order, and this starts from the early years.

The broad curriculum helps pupils understand a range of different topics. Staff, typically, have strong subject knowledge. They explain ideas thoughtfully and plan activities carefully. However, staff do not always have sufficient subject knowledge to enable pupils to learn as much as they could. The school is aware of this and is in the process of providing staff with regular training that helps them to improve their teaching further.

Teachers regularly check pupils' learning and address any misconceptions before moving on to more complex ideas. This means that pupils achieve well, in many cases exceeding national expectations. However, a few pupils do not have enough opportunities to revisit what they have learned before. The school is still working to design tasks to ensure that all pupils remember essential knowledge over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve very well. The school identifies pupils' needs promptly, and staff make skilful adaptations to their teaching of the curriculum. This enables pupils with SEND to build their knowledge and skills. The school encourages and supports disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, to participate in every aspect of school life, such as joining clubs and taking on leadership roles. Pupils leave the school prepared for their next steps.

Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. They show respect for one another. This starts in the Reception class, where children help each other willingly. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly and working hard in lessons. The school's sensitive and effective work with parents and carers is promoting and securing even better attendance than the high standards achieved in the past.

The school is passionate about developing pupils' characters so they become kind and responsible citizens. Pupils explore the curriculum more broadly through visits to places of interest, such as a space museum. Pupils are taught about diversity. They understand fundamental British values and their importance in modern Britain. They learn about different religions, building respect and acceptance of others' beliefs and views. In assemblies and lessons, pupils are invited to consider social and moral implications from different points of view.

Leaders at all levels have driven successful changes to improve the school. Governors and trustees provide effective support to the school. Workload and well-being are managed successfully to ensure that staff feel happy and proud to be part of the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff do not have sufficient subject expertise. In these instances, the impact of the curriculum is not routinely strong for a few pupils. The school should ensure that staff have the essential subject knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively across the curriculum.
- The tasks given to pupils in a few subjects are not designed precisely enough to help all pupils to reinforce and retain key information. As a result, there are variations in how securely pupils learn the intended curriculum. The school should make sure that staff have the expertise to design tasks for pupils to help them to remember, long term, the content they have been taught.

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	150335
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10341930
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	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marilyn Hubbard
CEO of the trust	Sarah Bennett
Headteacher	Lisa Watson
Website	www.lavendonschoolmk.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative provisions.
- Lavendon School converted to become an academy in January 2024. When its predecessor school, Lavendon School, was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2014, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of Inspiring Futures Through Learning Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and the CEO of the trust to which the school belongs. They also met with other senior leaders, trust officers, trustees and representatives of the school's governing body.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and computing. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and looked at writing across the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and pupil survey. They gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- 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 reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of governing board meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Clare Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Philip Wayne

Ofsted Inspector

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