

# Inspection of Leiston Primary School

King George's Avenue, Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4JQ

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Inspection dates:	3 and 4 June 2025
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The head of school for this school is Lucy Melton. The executive headteacher of this school is Helen Murray. This school is part of East Anglian Schools Trust (EAST), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Angelo Goduti, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stella Mackenzie.

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

The school prioritises the well-being of pupils, providing timely and tenacious support for them. Most pupils behave well, including the youngest children. Pupils are kind to one another, and value the help that they receive from staff. Staff ensure that pupils are happy, respectful and very well cared for.

Pupils enjoy the extensive range of educational trips, visits and visitors to their school. They like working towards their '11-by-11' activities, the 11 things to do by the time they are 11 years old. These opportunities broaden pupils' experiences and introduce them to new ideas. Pupils also take on the extended range of roles and responsibilities available to them this year enthusiastically, including through a well-organised and pro-active school council. They would like more after-school clubs.

Staff are ambitious for their pupils, and, typically, pupils enjoy their learning. Recently, the school introduced a new curriculum. There are signs that this is starting to have a positive impact, notably for the youngest and oldest pupils. However, the school's curriculum is not well implemented at times. Some pupils do not learn as well as they should, including in English and mathematics.

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

Leaders have implemented a well-organised, and well-resourced, curriculum. The school's work has made substantial in-roads in the quality of education, especially for the youngest children and oldest pupils. However, some of this work does not identify and support pupils to keep up effectively with their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. In other subjects, some teachers focus on the completion of activities, rather than the learning as outlined in the curriculum. This means that pupils do not consistently develop a rich understanding of the content and concepts that need to be learned.

Since the previous inspection, the school has established its chosen phonics programme. Pupils have access to appropriate high-quality books and resources, which helps them to practise and develop their reading skills. The school has trained staff so that the programme is delivered very well. Standards are rising quickly and securely. Pupils learn to read fluently and gain a strong understanding about what they are reading.

The curriculum in the early years is well thought out. Well-trained staff teach children to take turns, listen to each other, and become increasingly independent. They use a range of opportunities effectively in order to support children's language and communication, early reading, writing and mathematics. Staff are precise and adept in identifying and supporting children who need extra help quickly. The school ensures that children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start.

Pupils with educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs well identified. Teaching uses well-planned strategies to support pupils, including using external professional specialist expertise and guidance, where needed. However, the school is not

as consistently effective in supporting pupils' cognitive learning needs. Some pupils with these needs do not learn as well as they should.

Typically, pupils behave well, are kind and keen to learn. The school has worked diligently in developing the curriculum to support pupils' social skills. For example, pupils learn lots about positive relationships and how to look after their own emotional well-being. Where needed, parents and carers value the support from the attendance and welfare team, whose members work closely with vulnerable pupils and their families to support them. As a result, these pupils' attendance and behaviour have improved markedly.

Pupils learn effectively about the importance of friendships, healthy living, different families, cultures and religions. The school continues to look for ways to widen opportunities and participation in the school, local and national community, especially for disadvantaged pupils. For example, through offering a large range of opportunities that support pupils to understand the local community, the world of work and study available to them in the future.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, have brought in a wealth of well-considered and much-needed changes in all areas of the school's work since the previous inspection. Leaders have been tenacious in bringing about rapid essential change and know precisely what they still must do. Staff are generally positive about the changes that have been made and the support for their well-being and workload. Many parents are effusive in their praise for leaders' work.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In core subjects, assessment is not used effectively in order to check some pupils' understanding. This means that gaps in some pupils' knowledge are not addressed, and some pupils struggle to keep up with their learning. The school should ensure that assessment practices are effective to pick up and address gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Some teaching does not support pupils' cognitive learning needs precisely. Some pupils with SEND are not being supported to learn as effectively as they should. Leaders should work with staff to support pupils' cognitive needs, as well as ensuring that they have their SEMH, sensory, physical and communication needs.
- In foundation subjects, teaching focuses often on the completion of activities, rather than how well pupils are understanding and applying the concepts and content that they need to learn. This means that pupils do not consistently build their knowledge and understanding in these subjects well. Leaders need to ensure that staff are delivering this curriculum as they intend, so that pupils develop the rich understanding as planned.

## 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>	141554
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323747
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	408
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Stella MacKenzie
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Angelo Goduti
<b>Headteachers</b>	Lucy Melton and Helen Murray
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leistonprimary.org.uk">www.leistonprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 April 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school was previously part of The Avocet Academy Trust. In November 2023, The Avocet Academy Trust merged with EAST. The school became part of EAST on the same date.
- There has been a change in the headteacher since the previous inspection. The head of school took on the role in February 2024 on an interim basis and was made permanent head of school in April 2024. The executive headteacher took on the role in November 2023.
- The school currently uses two registered provisions and one unregistered alternative provision.

## 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 judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, executive headteacher, the assistant headteacher and leader for SEND and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the chair of the local governing body and several other governors. Inspectors also met with the CEO of the trust and other trust leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and English, mathematics, geography, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and look at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other aspects of the curriculum, including in the early years.
- 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.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils. To gather evidence about pupils' experiences, inspectors observed them at different times during the school day, spoke to them during social times, and met with groups of pupils across key stages.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted via the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also reviewed the responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

## Inspection team

Kim Pigram, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca McCutcheon	Ofsted Inspector
Cassandra Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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