

Inspection of Longcot and Fernham Church of England Primary School

Kings Lane, Longcot, Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 7SY

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Longcot and Fernham Church of England Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils of Longcot and Fernham have high expectations of themselves and others. This is clear to see in the exceptionally kind and considerate way that they encourage and support each other at school. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles, where they make valuable contributions by tackling and discussing important issues such as bullying, mental health and the environment.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have their needs met well. Pupils benefit from the high ambitions that their teachers have for them. They love to learn and are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Pupils talk with pride about their values of 'Love, Honesty and Respect' and why they are important to show. From the time that pupils join the school, these values help them to develop character and learn to become positive and active citizens in their community.

Pupils have warm relationships with adults in the school, which helps them to feel safe. Bullying rarely happens, but pupils know that adults will be quick to help them if it does. However, leaders do not consistently show a rigorous approach in the recording of actions and outcomes of safeguarding incidents and concerns.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that helps pupils to build knowledge well from the moment they join in Nursery. Subject leaders work well with teachers to help them understand the best way to teach the curriculum. As a result, teachers have the knowledge to deliver the intended curriculum well. This is clear to see in established subjects such as religious education and mathematics, where carefully planned activities, along with careful questions from teachers, help pupils to understand complex concepts and ideas.

Generally, the school's curriculum ensures pupils build knowledge in a way that helps them learn more. However, this is less well developed in a small number of subjects. Subsequently, pupils are not learning as well as they could across the entire curriculum. In early reading, the school has recently put in place a new phonics scheme. While this is being taught well in early years, some staff are yet to be trained to deliver the scheme. This means that some staff do not have the knowledge they need to teach the programme accurately. Leaders have plans for staff to receive this training. They have also put careful thought into how the school will move from the old phonics scheme to the new one. Additional activities take place for those pupils who fall behind in reading. The impact of this help is evident in the outcomes that all pupils achieve.

Teachers routinely use activities at the start of each lesson to see what pupils can remember. These help pupils to build on previous learning. In practical subjects, leaders are starting to use portfolios of work to assess what pupils know and to ensure that any gaps in knowledge are quickly found and filled.

All pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well in this school. Teachers' rapid checking of pupils' knowledge means they find and close any gaps quickly. The provision for pupils with SEND is effective in meeting their needs. The school's special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) is knowledgeable and shows tenacity and rigour in getting pupils the help they need to achieve well.

Leaders have implemented a personal, social, health and economic education scheme which meets the needs of the school community well. Among other things, pupils learn how to have healthy relationships and to be respectful about different identities and cultures. Leaders help pupils build confidence and character by providing wider opportunities. They have thought about some of the different talents and interests that pupils have. Pupils gain sound knowledge of the fundamental British values, which helps them understand their roles in wider society. Leaders have planned opportunities to teach pupils about these values and provided further activities to enhance understanding of democracy through the school council.

Leaders have created a highly positive school community. Pupils thrive due to the deliberate ways in which staff help them to show respect for each other and celebrate their successes. They attend and behave exceptionally well, making positive contributions to the school and the wider community. Pupils are proud to be 'agents for change' and actively promote anti-bullying messages and actions.

Staff are proud to work at the school and support each other effectively. Leaders prioritise staff well-being and carefully consider how any changes to workload will have an impact on staff. Governors work with school leaders to ensure the best quality education for pupils. However, governors have not shown this level of scrutiny for all aspects of their role. They have not ensured that the school consistently meets its equalities objectives. The trust provides well-structured support for the school, including with safeguarding, but leaders do not always make the most of this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete appropriate checks on adults who work in the school, and governors monitor these often. Staff receive regular training to help them be alert to the signs that show pupils may be at risk or need early help and support. Staff are swift to report worries verbally, which helps to keep pupils safe. However, lack of training on recording systems for all staff creates potential weaknesses in the safeguarding process.

Leaders work with external agencies and the trust safeguarding lead to get help for pupils and their families. However, although the culture of safeguarding is effective overall, safeguarding leaders do not consistently record incidents or subsequent actions in enough detail.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not consistently follow their own safeguarding procedures. Due to this, leaders do not have the clear oversight of safeguarding concerns and incidents that they should. Leaders should ensure that they precisely follow safeguarding procedures, as set out within statutory and trust guidance, to ensure that record-keeping is detailed and robust.
- A few subjects are not delivered in the way that leaders intend. This means that pupils are not consistently learning as well as they could across the whole curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff receive training that will give them the expert knowledge they need to implement the curriculum as intended by leaders, and help pupils build knowledge over time.
- Governors do not have consistent oversight of their statutory duties. This means that they do not ensure that leaders are maintaining effective provision regarding safeguarding and equalities. Governors need to be precise in their strategic oversight and monitoring of these areas to guarantee the necessary challenge to school leaders.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140283
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10256322
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Liz Holmes
Headteacher	Claire Mellor
Website	www.longcotandfernhamschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher started in her role in September 2011.
- Longcot and Fernham Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2013. When its predecessor school, Longcot and Fernham Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2009, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is a Church of England school, within the diocese of Oxford. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2019. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team, including the SENDCo. The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and one other trustee, who was also the diocesan representative. She also met with the chair and two other members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology and religious education. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school improvement plan and minutes from governors' meetings.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and also took into account their responses to Ofsted's Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and the safeguarding lead and director of education from the trust, to discuss the arrangements for safeguarding. During these meetings, the lead inspector scrutinised records and sampled case files to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. A team inspector examined the school's work in recruiting and checking on the suitability of staff. Inspectors also checked the knowledge of staff about their responsibilities.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ian Elkington

Ofsted Inspector

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