

# Long Wittenham Church of England Primary School

High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4QJ

## Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the curriculum. In some year groups, teachers do not use assessment information effectively to identify the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, do not always receive work that is sufficiently challenging. As a result, pupils' progress is hampered and too few pupils reach the higher standards of attainment.
- Pupils' progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics has been too slow. Consequently, some pupils have to make up ground because of poor teaching in the past.
- Some interventions do not always meet pupils' needs well enough. Some adults' expectations are too low and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not making secure progress in some subjects.
- Leaders have revamped school improvement planning and associated monitoring activities. This work is at an early stage and it is too soon to judge its success.
- Some elements of the school's website do not comply with requirements.

### The school has the following strengths

- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Policies and procedures comply with the latest guidance.
- Governors know the school well. They are highly skilled and are contributing positively.
- Leaders are successfully instigating improvement to the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of the school's curriculum.
- Children in early years benefit from high-quality teaching. As a result, they are well prepared for their move into key stage 1.
- Pupils are polite and considerate of one another's feelings.
- Pupils' presentation of their work is consistently strong.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, raising standards particularly for pupils with SEND and the most able pupils, by:
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan tasks that meet the needs of pupils
  - making sure that teachers adapt and modify tasks when necessary
  - ensuring that teachers make appropriate use of resources and images to model mathematical concepts effectively
  - increasing the level of challenge and raising teachers' expectations.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management and governance, by:
  - using findings from monitoring activities to further shape school improvement actions
  - further developing the skills of subject leaders, so that they contribute more strongly to improving the quality of teaching and learning, including in science
  - further improving the quality of provision for pupils with SEND
  - ensuring that the school's website meets requirements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Following the section 8 inspection that took place in March 2018, leaders have rightly instigated a phase of adjustment that exemplifies their raised expectations. They acknowledge that pupils' learning needs to improve. However, progress towards securing this aim, including in improving the quality of teaching, was initially very slow. As a result, in 2017/18, the status quo, as described in the previous report, persisted.
- Since September, and with intensified support from local authority representatives, leaders have begun to work more analytically and with greater resolve. Together, they have launched new approaches to many aspects of the school's provision, including assessment procedures, school improvement planning and associated monitoring activities. Furthermore, some new teachers have joined, adding fresh impetus to the momentum for change. As a result, leaders and governors are now much better placed to tackle the areas of the school's work that require improvement.
- The school's self-evaluation document and improvement plan provide a strong starting point for securing better outcomes for pupils. The plan identifies the right priorities, including a focus on accelerating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Despite early signs of improvement, it is too soon to measure the impact of leaders' actions on outcomes for pupils.
- Working closely with the local authority, leaders have started to make some strides forward. For example, in a short space of time, leaders and governors have rapidly improved pupils' attendance. With new appointments, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the school's curriculum are also beginning to improve securely in some departments.
- Rightly, leaders have spent time ensuring that the school's performance information is reliable, as this has not always been the case. The school has recently become more outward looking, making productive use of closer links with other schools to standardise assessment information. As a result, and following some adjustment, leaders have now established an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a clear overview of this aspect, including the needs of pupils who require extra support. Nevertheless, some interventions do not always meet pupils' needs carefully enough.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have intensified their monitoring activity of the school's work. Leaders are beginning to use what this information reveals to modify or strengthen their improvement actions. Nevertheless, their work is at an early stage.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, in some subjects, such as science, pupils are not yet developing a secure understanding of key scientific concepts, such as insulation.
- The school's provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective. The school's plans for pupil premium spending are comprehensive, although some key information, such as a review date, is missing. Nevertheless, the plan appropriately addresses pupils' key

barriers to learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils often make good progress across key aspects of learning.

- The school's leadership team has secured the strong support of parents and carers, who can already see a renewed drive for improvement. Many report that recent changes to teaching and learning are beginning to improve their child's experience. For instance, one parent commented, 'It is clear that the school leadership team are passionate about education and have made good progress in the last couple of years of recruiting a set of staff that are well equipped to help bring about change.'
- Although most school policies are kept under watchful review, the school's website does not contain all the necessary information, such as that relating to pupil performance information.
- This year, local authority advisers have intensified their support. The approach is helpful and is beginning to lead to more rapid improvement. Leaders are strengthening their skills quickly because of wise counsel.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body is made up of governors with a high level of expertise. Many have an educational background. As a result, governors have the knowledge and skills that they need to hold leaders to account effectively. They share leaders' high expectations and are determined to see the school improve.
- In recent times, governors have welcomed support from local authority officers more openly. This is helpful. Governors are determined to play their part, such as when conducting useful focused visits. Consequently, they know precisely which areas the school needs to improve.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have received the required level of training, including those who are new to the school. Staff know how to raise concerns with the school's designated safeguarding leads. Records are orderly and rightly kept chronologically and securely. The school's designated safeguarding leads liaise proactively with other agencies, including social care services and the police.
- Safer recruitment processes are implemented and understood. Staff receive the required level of checks before commencing employment.
- Adults know pupils and their families well. Pupils say that they feel safe at school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teaching is not consistently good across all year groups. This variability in the quality of teaching is reflected in pupils' inconsistent progress across key stages 1 and 2. Consequently, outcomes for pupils require improvement.

- Some teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to plan effectively for all pupils to progress sufficiently well. Some are not yet making use of leaders' new and more comprehensive assessment information to plan tasks that are at just the right level for different groups of pupils, including the most able pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough in some year groups and some subjects. Some teachers are less skilled than others in identifying when pupils are ready to move on. This means that pupils' progress, including for the most able pupils, is not as rapid as it needs to be to allow pupils to catch up quickly.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving. Teachers and teaching assistants now provide a greater focus on developing pupils' mathematical fluency and reasoning skills than in the past. However, in some classes, teachers' explanations are often drawn out because resources and images are not used well enough. As a result, some pupils, including those with SEND, do not grasp concepts as quickly as they might.
- In some year groups, teachers' expertise at overcoming pupils' barriers to learning is underdeveloped. Adults do not always adapt and modify tasks when needed. Similarly, sometimes the most able pupils finish tasks quickly and become unproductive. As a result, time is lost, and progress is not rapid enough for these pupils.
- Where teaching is strongest, pupils benefit from teachers' clear explanations and modelled examples of what is to be learned. For instance, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were able to make use of visual representations to calculate fractions of amounts successfully.
- Pupils are encouraged to present their work well. Teachers model what is expected, and pupils rise to the challenge. Positive relations nurtured by staff have led to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in the high standards of presentation across the school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in a range of situations. For instance, pupils are clear about what they would do if the building needed to be evacuated or if a lockdown procedure was required. Pupils say that adults keep them safe and that they feel secure in school.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the care that their children receive. One commented: 'I think it is an enduring strength of this school that a nurturing, caring ethos exists among the adults and the children too. My child is always happy and secure in school and enjoys friendships with children of all ages.'
- Pupils benefit from, and enjoy, positive friendships. There are very few disagreements, and pupils of different ages play and socialise well together.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are proficient at working together and listening attentively to one another's ideas. Pupils, and children in early years, respond well to instructions, organise themselves industriously between activities, take turns sensibly and are willing to work hard.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance has improved notably since September. Leaders have communicated raised expectations clearly to families. In return, families have responded well, and initial signs show that pupils' absence has decreased, and their attendance has improved. As a result, pupils' attendance is now in line with that seen nationally.
- Pupils know about bullying and can describe different types. They are adamant that bullying does not happen at this school because adults defuse any problems very effectively. Pupils have confidence in staff and know that any minor disagreements are quickly resolved.
- Pupils feel valued. They show a mature understanding of one another's differences, and are particularly proud that adults take great care of all pupils, including those who may experience difficulties from time to time.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children are safe, happy and well cared for in school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Although it is at an early stage, leaders are now gathering more reliable and comprehensive information about pupils' performance. Leaders are keeping a watchful oversight on the performance of key groups within the school, such as the disadvantaged pupils. However, some teaching staff are not as confident in how this information can be used to ensure that work is pitched at just the right level for pupils.
- Leaders know that over time, pupils' progress in the core subjects has been too slow. As a result, too few pupils, including the most able, have reached their full potential at the end of each key stage. Nevertheless, this year, from low starting points, more pupils are beginning to make greater gains in learning, particularly in upper key stage 2. More are on track to achieve age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics compared with the previous year.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 who achieved age-related expectations in writing and mathematics was well below that seen nationally. However, as the quality of teaching is improving this year, pupils are making better and more secure progress. Although pupils still need to catch up, initial signs of improvement are taking hold.
- Some pupils with SEND do not make the progress they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics. Some interventions are not always matched well enough to pupils' needs and sometimes make too little difference to supporting some pupils' learning.

- Too few pupils met the standard required in the Year 1 phonics check in 2018. Nevertheless, with adjustments to teaching arrangements this year, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are making more rapid progress and beginning to catch up. Phonics teaching is now effective and pupils across the key stages are equipped with appropriate skills to decode unfamiliar words.
- Children in early years achieve well. High-quality teaching means that most make strong progress from broadly average starting points.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader knows the children well, and as a result, leads this department purposefully. The leader's improvement planning is thoughtful and challenging. Priorities are well judged and exemplify the leader's perceptive understanding of where aspects of children's learning could be further strengthened, such as the more rapid development of children's writing skills.
- Cohorts are small, and as a result, children's starting points vary year on year. In 2017/18, most children joined the early years provision with knowledge and skills that were typical for their age. Although in 2018 the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was just below that seen nationally, most children made secure progress from their starting points. Children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Learning journeys track children's progress carefully against areas of learning. The early years leader is keeping a very close oversight of how well children are progressing from their starting points. Assessment information is used well.
- The early years leader is effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Adults have sound knowledge of each child's needs. This is reflected in adults' interactions with children, such as in an observed phonics session, during which the teacher and teaching assistant skilfully steered children's learning. The teaching of phonics in early years is highly effective.
- This year, children, including those who are disadvantaged, are making strong progress, including in communication, language, and literacy and number. The learning environment is set up thoughtfully to include a multitude of appealing activities that cover different aspects of learning. Staff are rightly providing a greater focus on the development of early writing skills, as last year, this was a comparable area of weakness.
- The early years leader has established very positive relationships with the school's feeder nursery schools. The early years leader goes above and beyond to ensure that staff in partner settings fully understand the Reception curriculum.
- Parents are full of praise for the start their child receives to schooling. One parent noted: 'My son started in Reception class in September 2018. I have nothing but praise to give. He loves going to school. He has become confident and although he is one of the youngest in his class, makes amazing progress and is starting to read.'

- Positive relationships between adults and children ensure that children are happy and enjoy school. Children behave well, help each other and play harmoniously with each other and their older counterparts.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children are effective and statutory welfare requirements are met. Children feel secure and well looked after.

## School details

Unique reference number	123153
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10054130

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Elizabeth Atherton
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Bellingham
Telephone number	01865 407850
Website	<a href="http://www.long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk">www.long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office.3233@long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk">office.3233@long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2018

## Information about this school

- Long Wittenham Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place on 27 June 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other staff with significant responsibilities. The inspector also met with three representatives from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector visited a variety of lessons in all year groups, all accompanied by the headteacher, and reviewed some work in pupils' books.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- Parents' views were considered through the 76 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 38 free-text comments. The inspector took account of 12 survey responses submitted by staff. The inspector held a discussion with eight pupils from key stage 2.
- The inspector scrutinised records and documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, pupils' individual records and school improvement planning.
- The inspector reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

## Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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