

Inspection of a good school: Long Field Spencer Academy

Ambleside Way, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0BN

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

Outcome

Long Field Spencer Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils cherish being part of this school family. They recognise the school's unique ethos. They delight in their many and varied accomplishments. Staff colourfully and vividly celebrate pupils' successes, achievements and learning, in classrooms and corridors and on social media. Pupils form lasting memories.

The school's motto, 'together, enjoy, achieve' (TEA), is lived daily. TEA is celebrated through a myriad of teapots, valued by staff and pupils. The school's values underpin what the school is and what it aims for. Staff set high behavioural expectations. Pupils behave well. They are mature, polite and respectful. They recognise that the school's approach to improving behaviour works well for those who need a helping hand.

Pupils feel safe at school. They appreciate the way that staff listen. Pupils are confident that staff help to sort out any worries. For example, staff deal with bullying appropriately, but it rarely occurs.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about their children's experiences. They believe that the dedication of staff, including that of the principal, is exceptional. They appreciate the school's strong pastoral care.

Many parents, pupils, staff and governors recognise the school's positive and quirky nature. Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They are happy at school.

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

Leaders and staff embrace and promote the school's values. They have developed a strong sense of belonging and identity. Leaders lead with a strong moral purpose. They have developed a distinctive ethos. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad in its scope for all pupils. This extends beyond the expectations of the national curriculum. There is an increase in the uptake of modern languages among Years 10 and 11 pupils.

This enables more pupils to gain from a broader academic curriculum than was previously the case.

Leaders have developed ambitious curriculums in many subjects. Subject leaders set sound expectations of what pupils should learn. Teachers enable pupils to revisit and build learning over time. For example, in history, pupils develop a sophisticated understanding of historical concepts, such as cause, continuity and consequence. Leaders are consolidating the delivery of subject curriculums and the quality of education. However, there is scope to raise learning expectations even further and for all pupils to know and remember even more.

Teachers enable pupils to learn key knowledge and skills well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Staff regularly check pupils' learning. They use questions to check pupils' learning and deepen understanding. Teachers plan for possible misconceptions and errors. They make sure that pupils recall more over time.

Teachers make sure that the curriculum is suitable for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders and staff understand and support the needs of these pupils well. Teachers adapt their teaching and provide appropriate resources, if needed. Many parents recognise the positive provision for pupils with SEND.

Leaders are developing a strong culture of reading. Staff assess pupils' reading regularly. They use this information to determine which pupils need extra support to catch up. Leaders make sure that these pupils get the help to become fluent and confident in their reading. Appropriate staff are trained to provide specific support, for example to deliver an age-appropriate phonics scheme. Leaders are developing pupils' love of reading.

Leaders ensure that the personal, social health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is carefully structured. Pupils recall their learning in the Years 7 to 10 mixed-age 'House Time' sessions. Year 11 pupils access the PSHE and careers education curriculums through enrichment days. Leaders give pupils structured opportunities to learn about physical and mental health. Pupils learn about age-appropriate relationships and sex education on enrichment days. Pupils learn about the importance of equality, diversity, inclusion and respect. Staff promote pupils' moral and social development very well.

Staff provide extensive opportunities that promote pupils' personal development. Pupils comment positively about the wide range of extra-curricular events and clubs that engage their interests. Older pupils speak passionately about their learning and cultural experiences while attending international visits to France, Germany, Indonesia and New York. They value the range of other enrichment experiences staff provide.

Trustees and governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They support and challenge leaders appropriately. They recognise and celebrate the school's distinctiveness.

Overwhelmingly, staff are proud to be part of this school. They are valued and respected professionally. They value the opportunities they receive to learn and develop in their

roles. They recognise that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. They enjoy working at the school, and describe the school community as a close family.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. They make sure that the safety and welfare of pupils are central to their work. Staff know their responsibilities well. They are well trained and receive regular safeguarding updates. Leaders know pupils and their backgrounds very well. Staff act swiftly when they identify concerns related to pupils' welfare. Leaders ensure that pupils get support when needed. They work effectively with a range of external agencies. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about potential risks and how to keep themselves safe, for example when online and when in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is strength in the quality of education at this school. Leaders demonstrate strong capacity to make this provision even better. Leaders should further raise expectations across the school and ensure that all subject curriculums are of equal high calibre, enabling all pupils to know and remember even more of the ambitiously planned curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in February 2018.

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	138628
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10268951
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	910
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donna Kinderman
Principal	Christopher Haggett
Website	http://longfieldspencer.com
Dates of previous inspection	31 January and 1 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is registered for pupils aged 11 to 18 years. However, the school does not have a sixth-form provision.
- The school uses a range of alternative providers. Two of these are registered with the Department for Education. Ten alternative providers are not registered.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 principal and other senior leaders. They met with trustees and governors in person. They met with the chair of governors remotely. They also met with trust officers.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- In addition, inspectors visited a range of lessons, including in English, music, French and German. They also visited 'House Time' sessions.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with safeguarding leads. They reviewed the single central record, the safeguarding policy and related documents and records.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including behaviour records and various policies.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss different aspects of school life.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also reviewed responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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