

Inspection of a good school: Lodge Lane Infant School

Lodge Lane, Old Catton, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 7HL

Inspection dates:

19–20 November 2019

Outcome

Lodge Lane Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Lodge Lane Infant School. Teachers lead classes through 'inquiry' topics, where pupils learn a great deal about science, history and geography. Pupils are highly engaged by these. There is a wide range of practical activities as part of their learning.

Pupils feel and are safe in the school. Parents and carers agree. Pupils enjoy playing together. They are able to sort out their own minor disagreements with the help of the 'squabble stoppers'. These pupils are trained by staff and take this responsibility very seriously. Pupils also have other responsibilities such as those of 'playpals', school council members, 'eco heroes' and 'library crew'. Bullying is very rare.

Each day starts with a 'morning meeting'. The class greet each other and have discussions about issues current to them in school and the wider world. They also practise key skills, such as number bonds. This meeting helps the class feel like a close-knit unit.

Pupils behave well. Any pupils who struggle with paying attention are given appropriate help to develop their listening skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high-quality support and make good progress.

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

Most learning is led through an inquiry approach. Pupils are presented with questions, for example about a lost penguin. This then leads into learning about science, history, geography and more.

The teaching of early reading is precise and teachers have excellent knowledge of how to deliver this well. Pupils enjoy reading. Teachers spend good-quality time with groups, sharing interesting and challenging books. They prioritise reading with the whole class and share stories in assemblies.

Pupils practise writing their letters on whiteboards, and older ones also practise handwriting in books. Pupils are taught writing techniques. They write in response to the inquiry and at other times (for example, in Reception, writing lists as part of play). However, the quantity and frequency of writing expected are not always demanding enough. Pupils do not practise their writing skills enough to reach higher standards.

Mathematics is taught well. Following a dip in attainment, pupils are now confident with number work. Teaching is consistent in the language and models used. Pupils use a wide range of apparatus to help them calculate. They enjoy mathematics, some choosing to continue with calculations in their free-choice time.

Leaders have begun planning out clearly what they expect pupils to learn each year, within the inquiry approach. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and have begun running staff training. They check yearly that the curriculum beyond mathematics and English has been fully covered. Subject leaders need to be clearer about how their subjects are being taught at an earlier stage each year. The way that the curriculum for early years leads into the key stage 1 learning is not fully planned out beyond that of the national curriculum.

Children make a good start to their school lives in Reception. They enjoy the range of activities on offer both inside and outside. They happily work with adults when asked, developing important skills. Parents say that their children have settled quickly and are making good progress. A range of workshops help parents to develop their children's learning at home.

Pupils are encouraged to ask questions in their inquiries and about stories read. Staff use these opportunities to encourage values such as kindness. This work is of high quality. Pupils are well behaved. They carry out a wide variety of responsible jobs around school, helping keep it tidy, and support each other with minor disagreements.

Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength. Staff have received good-quality training to enable them to better meet the needs of the pupils. Some pupils have significant SEND needs. They are fully part of their classes and leaders prioritise the extra skills they need.

The school is well led. Staff and parents report confidence in the senior leadership of the school. Parents spoken to were clear that any concerns are dealt with quickly. Staff know that leaders are considerate of workload.

The multi-academy trust has recently reviewed the set-up of its local advisory bodies (LABs). The LAB has some delegated governance responsibilities. Trustees have formed a new shared LAB. At the time of the inspection, the first meeting of this LAB had not yet taken place. The trust and experienced members of the LAB have the skills to develop the work of this group, and the success of the LAB is a priority for the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The systems in place in the school enable rapid communication between staff about any concerns. Staff are well trained to understand what risks pupils may face and particularly how the youngest pupils in the school may communicate their vulnerabilities.

Those responsible for governance make sure that all appropriate checks are made on adults in the school.

Pupils are clear about how to keep themselves safe. They are taught about stranger danger and keeping themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The expectations of writing quantity and how often pupils are expected to write are not always demanding enough. Pupils need more, high-quality opportunities to put what they have learned about the structure of writing into practice, so that they reach higher standards and at a greater depth.
- The process of developing progression frameworks to enhance what is already in place is well under way for most subjects. However, systems for checking on what is taught and the quality of this throughout the school year are not yet fully in place. The way that key stage 1 builds on early years is not yet clear in the progression frameworks. Planning does not pay enough attention to elements of the Reception curriculum.
- The new LAB has only just been formed. For good support and challenge in the future, it is important that it establishes quickly how this body will operate effectively over two schools. The practice of those members entirely new to the role or the school needs developing, so that they become more familiar with the work.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good or we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Lodge Lane Infant School, to be good in October 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	143988
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10112157
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Smith
Headteacher	Rebecca Dewing
Website	www.lodgelaneschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Wensum Trust. This multi-academy trust is formed of 11 schools, in three areas spread over Norfolk.
- The school opened as an academy in 2017, replacing the predecessor school with the same name.
- The school shares a headteacher and a local governing body with another school in the trust, Garrick Green Infant School.
- The school is currently formed of two Reception classes, three Year 1 classes and three Year 2 classes.
- The school provides a breakfast club, after-school club and holiday club, Cheeky Monkeys. The clubs are run by school staff. The clubs also cater for pupils aged seven to 11 from White Woman Lane Junior School who travel to and from their own school by a 'walking bus'.
- There is a separately run and registered pre-school, Old Catton Preschool, on the school site.

Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, I spoke to a wide range of staff. This included the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, teachers and support staff. I met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the chair of the trustees and the chair of the local advisory body.
- Mathematics, reading and geography were considered as part of this inspection. I visited lessons and spoke to pupils, teachers and subject leaders. I looked at a range of pupils' work.
- After looking at pupils' books, I followed up whether pupils' writing was sufficient to fully challenge them by undertaking further lesson visits, talking to teachers and looking at pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding arrangements, I examined the single central record and associated documents. I looked at a range of safeguarding concerns and how leaders had followed these through. I spoke to a range of staff in different roles about their understanding of safeguarding arrangements and to pupils about how they felt about school.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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