

# Long Melford Church of England Primary School

Cordell Road, Long Melford, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 9ED

## Inspection dates

10–11 July 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher's clear vision focuses effectively on supporting pupils' achievements, both in and out of the classroom. Staff implement the vision well. As a result, the quality of education provided to pupils has improved considerably since the predecessor school was judged to require special measures.
- Senior leaders know what they do well but they concentrate their energies effectively on what they could still do better. Consequently, the capacity of leaders to continue to improve the school is strong.
- The support provided by the trust has been instrumental in supporting the school's development.
- Governors and trustees have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths. They provide leaders with effective support and challenge.
- Teaching is typically good and it is improving. Consequently, most pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils enjoy a broad and balanced range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and are grateful for the training opportunities that are open to them. Staff morale is high.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They make strong and increasingly better progress.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well looked after and that they are kept safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a strength of the school.
- Subject leaders are afforded an appropriate range of support, challenge and training. The leadership of English and mathematics is well established and has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics (foundation subjects) is relatively new. Leaders in these areas are less secure in checking the quality of teaching and its effect on learning.
- Learning activities and teachers' questioning do not always provide enough challenge to the most able pupils. This means that their overall progress is not as strong as that of their classmates.
- Children get off to a good start to their education in the early years. However, some children, including the most able, are not always fully challenged to exceed the early learning goals for attainment by the end of Reception.

## Full report

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

- Develop and embed more consistent and effective strategies to monitor and enhance the impact of the foundation subjects.
- Further improve the progress made by most-able pupils by ensuring that teachers:
  - are more effective when questioning large groups of pupils so that they ascertain and respond to what pupils know and understand
  - ensure that learning activities consistently take account of pupils' starting points to provide sufficient levels of challenge.
- Ensure that staff in the early years consistently challenge children to make significant gains in their learning and achieve highly.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and assistant headteachers have high expectations of themselves, the school's staff and its pupils. Leaders focus successfully on raising pupils' expectations of themselves and on providing them with a wide range of activities, both in and outside of the classroom. Governors, teachers and other adults share this vision and they implement it in a consistent manner. As a result, the quality of education that pupils receive has improved considerably in recent years.
- All parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend it to other parents. One parent, reflecting the views of others, wrote: 'A fantastic school, each and every child is valued and happy. The headteacher, staff and all support staff are always available.' Another stated: 'I think the school has improved immensely in the last few years. Strong, stable leadership has helped so much.'
- Staff morale is high. Teachers and teaching assistants said that they are valued and well looked after and that leaders are effective at taking their workload into account when making decisions. Staff said that communication in the school is clear and that they receive high-quality training.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide staff with appropriate professional development. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that the study of English and mathematics is supplemented by a wide range of subjects, such as geography, history and science. Pupils enjoy new, interesting topics such as food and farming, minibeasts and 'Mighty, mighty Melford'.
- Pupils' experience at school is enhanced by the range of extra-curricular activities that leaders provide. Activities such as dance club, hockey and tennis are popular with pupils.
- The provision for pupils' SMSC development is effective. Adults promote equality and diversity well in lessons, in assemblies and through their behaviour around the school. Pupils also gain a strong understanding of the importance of fundamental British values, such as democracy, respect and tolerance. This is evident in displays around the school and through the positions of responsibility pupils hold. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning that are faced by disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Leaders understand pupils' needs, check their progress closely and provide them with additional support when needed. The headteacher holds staff robustly to account for the progress of both groups of pupils. These pupils make good overall progress from their starting points.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent effectively. Pupils have access to a wide range of sporting clubs and new equipment, while staff have benefited from effective training that has improved their teaching. Participation in clubs

and competitions is high.

- English and mathematics are well led. Subject leaders are knowledgeable, monitor their areas closely and their plans for improvement are having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Leaders of the foundation subjects are relatively new to their roles and their monitoring and assessment practices are not as well established. Consequently, expectations of pupils are not as consistently high in these subjects as they are in English and mathematics. Senior leaders are providing foundation subject leaders with appropriate support, training and challenge. However, it is too early to see the impact of these actions.
- Leaders check pupils' work routinely. Together with teachers, they support most current pupils to make good progress from their different starting points. However, most-able pupils' progress is not as strong as that of their classmates. This is because this group of pupils is not always sufficiently challenged in all lessons.

### **Governance of the school**

- The board of trustees has very effectively coordinated a period of transformational change, following the judgement that the predecessor school required special measures. They have ensured that the school has been well supported in terms of governance, school leadership and staff training.
- Governors know the school well. They have an accurate understanding of its strengths but they also focus closely on its priorities for improvement. Governors are effective at holding leaders to account. They do this through challenging leaders at governing body meetings and when undertaking routine visits to the school.
- Governors ensure that they meet their legal duties, especially in safeguarding pupils' welfare. The link safeguarding governor checks safeguarding arrangements routinely, including the record of pre-employment checks on staff. Governors also undertake routine safeguarding audits. Governors receive valuable training that helps them to understand their responsibilities regarding keeping pupils safe.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff at all levels receive routine safeguarding training and they know how to identify pupils who are potentially at risk. Staff understand, and follow, leaders' clear procedures for reporting any safeguarding concerns.
- School leaders ensure that staff log safeguarding concerns appropriately and that child-protection referrals are dealt with effectively. The maintenance of child-protection files is effective, and leaders work well with representatives from other agencies to ensure that pupils quickly get the support they need.
- All required checks are carried out when recruiting new staff to work with pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- As a result of leaders' actions, the overall quality of teaching across the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 is good, and continuously improving. Parents who met with inspectors, and the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View, agreed that pupils are taught well and make good progress.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Teachers establish clear routines and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respect their teachers and have positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils are keen to get involved in activities and they are not afraid to take risks and make mistakes.
- Teachers provide pupils with effective opportunities to undertake individual, paired and group tasks. Pupils are confident to share and discuss ideas with their classmates. They use these opportunities well to debate issues and think of questions that they would like to ask.
- Good subject knowledge enables teachers to provide pupils with clear and precise explanations of important concepts. Teachers are adept at providing pupils with examples and demonstrations of good-quality work. This supports pupils to develop key knowledge, understanding and skills that they build on over time.
- Learning support assistants provide effective support to pupils with SEND. They work closely with teachers and they understand the needs of the pupils that they are supporting. Their effective questioning and explanation of tasks support pupils with SEND to make strong progress.
- Teachers' questioning of larger groups of pupils is less effective than when they work with pupils individually. Teachers do not always use questioning rigorously enough to check the extent of pupils' knowledge and understanding before moving on to new tasks. When this happens, pupils – particularly the most able – are not moved on to more challenging tasks quickly enough.
- Teaching in the foundation subjects allows pupils to study a wide range of new topics that they enjoy. However, learning activities in these subjects do not always provide an appropriate level of challenge to develop pupils' subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills sufficiently. Consequently, pupils' progress is less consistent in these subjects than in English and mathematics.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils say that they are safe at school. All staff who completed the Ofsted survey, and all parents who responded to Parent View, agree. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and that they know who to talk to if they have any worries. Pupils say that staff deal with their concerns quickly.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe, for example through lessons, assemblies and visiting speakers. Topics covered include friendships, bullying, internet safety and sex and

relationships education.

- Pupils are well looked after. Staff know pupils well and consistently follow the school's procedures to keep them safe. Staff develop strong relationships with parents and they work effectively to support pupils and their families. One parent, reflecting the views of others, wrote: 'The teachers and headteacher go way beyond their teaching duties, for every child is important to them.' Another stated: 'The school does whatever it can to help if there is any issue, and staff go out of their way to help if there is a problem.'
- A high proportion of the very large sample of pupils who responded to the Ofsted survey agree that the school encourages them to look after their emotional, mental and physical health.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is positive. They are friendly, polite and well mannered. Teachers are consistent in applying the school's behaviour policy and pupils respond positively to their teachers' requests. Consequently, low-level disruption is infrequent. When it happens, teachers respond promptly and effectively.
- Pupils behave well at lunch and breaktimes, where they are well supervised. Pupils enjoy socialising or playing sensibly.
- Leaders and staff have mutually high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, good behaviour is the norm. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare, and there have been no fixed-period exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils enjoy school and very few are persistently absent.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils typically start Year 1 having reached a good level of development at the end of Reception.
- Pupils' outcomes have improved in recent years. In 2017 and 2018, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was at least in line with, and often above, national averages. In 2017 and 2018, at the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment at the expected standard and at greater depth was also broadly in line with national averages.
- Current pupils' overall progress is in line with, and sometimes above, leaders' expectations. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are making particularly strong progress in reading and mathematics, while they make good overall progress in writing.
- Pupils in Year 1 acquire phonics knowledge well and make good progress in developing their reading skills.
- Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged currently make good progress from their starting points. Staff quickly identify their different needs and support them effectively in their learning.
- Although current pupils' overall progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good,

the overall progress of the most able pupils is not as strong as that of their classmates. This group of pupils are making progress towards their targets but they still have ground to catch up.

- Current pupils' strong overall progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not always replicated in the foundation subjects. This is because pupils are not consistently challenged to develop subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding to the same extent as they are in English and mathematics.
- Leaders organise a variety of transition activities so that pupils are well prepared, both academically and personally, for their transition to secondary school.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Most children join Nursery and Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of effective early assessment, leaders ensure that children's individual needs are identified quickly and that learning activities support their progress.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was above the national average in 2018. Leaders' assessments, evidence in children's workbooks and observations of teaching all demonstrate that children this year are currently making good overall progress.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the future development of the early years provision. Adults' work to support children as they join the provision is effective. They work closely with families to ensure that children make a smooth start to their education. Parents appreciate the effective transition arrangements.
- Links with parents remain strong as children progress through the early years. Parents are grateful for the very regular informal opportunities to meet and discuss any concerns with the early years team.
- The early years curriculum provides children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their academic, social and emotional skills. Children benefit from individual, small-group and whole-class support.
- Adults ensure that children behave well and that they are safe. Children collaborate well and they support each other effectively. The environment is safe and adults are well trained to care for and protect the children. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- Teaching in the early years is effective. Children benefit from a range of well-planned activities that interest them and allow them to develop their skills across the different areas of learning. However, there are times when adults' questioning does not sufficiently challenge children, including the most able, to make the progress of which they are capable.
- The early years team regularly observes children to assess how quickly they are developing and to see if they need extra help. Although this ensures that children make good overall progress, there are times when some activities are not challenging enough to move children's learning and development forward.

## School details

Unique reference number	143147
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10088645

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Caroline Robinson
Headteacher	Amanda Woolmer
Telephone number	01787 379 929
Website	<a href="http://www.longmelfordprimaryschool.co.uk">www.longmelfordprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@longmelfordprimaryschool.co.uk">office@longmelfordprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is the school's first inspection since it joined the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust in September 2016.
- Responsibility for the school's performance lies with the trust's board of directors. There is representation from the trust board on the school's local governing body. There are currently 18 schools within the trust.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who receive SEND support are below average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, leaders, teachers, learning support assistants and governors. An inspector also met with a representative from the trust.
- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, at times jointly with leaders.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by inspectors throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life.
- An inspector heard pupils read and discussed their reading habits with them.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including assessment information and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. They also scrutinised leaders' improvement plans and their behaviour, safeguarding and attendance records.
- Inspectors spoke to parents before school and considered the 36 responses, and the 26 free-text comments, made by parents to the Parent View questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Daniel Gee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joanna Pedlow

Ofsted Inspector

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