

Inspection of Langafel Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Road, Longfield, Kent DA3 7PW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Each pupil here is known and valued individually. However, inconsistent teaching means that pupils do not achieve well enough. In early years, teaching is more tailored to children's individual needs. As a result, their learning is better. This is also the case in the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils feel safe in school, and they interact positively with staff and each other. They particularly enjoy the outdoor learning spaces. In class, pupils sometimes disengage from learning. At times, pupils talk over staff, and this can get in the way of learning. Pupils' attendance is also not strong, and this leads to too many pupils missing vital learning.

Throughout the school, equality and diversity are celebrated. Pupils take part in a broad range of activities, from sports to cooking. Outdoor experiences and visits to museums help to broaden pupils' horizons. Staff make sure that SEND needs are not a barrier to this. Pupils enjoy making an active contribution to their community. They take part in litter picks in school and visits to the local care home. This helps to foster the school's ethos of being part of 'one flock'.

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

The school has a clear structure for what pupils will learn. However, teachers are not clear enough about what pupils should learn next. Alongside this, teachers do not always consider where pupils start from in their learning. For example, in mathematics, some teachers do not give enough thought to how to address pupils' misconceptions or close gaps in learning. As a consequence, tasks and explanations do not build on what pupils already know. Where this is more precise, such as in phonics, pupils are able to use familiar sounds to decode new words.

Teachers' use of assessment is not systematic. Often, they do not check whether all pupils have understood concepts and tasks. In subjects such as English, teachers question and test to gather a clear picture of pupils' knowledge. By contrast, in history, there is not a consistent approach to making sure that pupils understand or retain knowledge. In early years, staff pay close attention to children's vocabulary and communication. As a result, staff know how to extend children's learning further. This also helps staff to identify potential SEND needs swiftly. Teachers provide resources and materials to help pupils learn. These are effective for helping pupils with SEND to access learning. Phonics is generally taught well. The books provided for early readers are well chosen. Weaker readers have regular catch-up sessions to practise key sounds and words. This helps them to develop confidence with reading.

Pupils' achievement is not as good as it should be. Pupils who are part of the specially resourced provision or the 'nurture class' benefit from effective teaching that builds on what they know. As a result, these pupils achieve well from their starting points. Within the mainstream classes, pupils' work is not of a consistently

high quality. This reflects the fact that, too often, they do not understand the tasks or ideas they are working on. Published outcomes reflect the inconsistency in pupils' learning.

Expectations for behaviour are not consistently high. The school has clear systems to manage behaviour, but these are not always used effectively. At times, this leads to learning being lost because pupils are not engaged or focused enough. Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. Attendance is a priority area within the school, and leaders are taking steps to tackle root causes such as anxiety. Despite this, disadvantaged pupils in particular still do not attend well enough. As a result, these pupils are falling further behind in their learning.

The school's pastoral care is strong. Vulnerable groups, such as young carers, benefit from bespoke support. Pupils learn about looking after their mental and physical health. Children in early years learn about expressing and managing their emotions. They learn to take turns and to be a good friend. In reflection sessions, pupils consider ethical issues such as fair trade, as well as learning about different faiths.

Parental engagement is a strength of the school's work. As part of the transition into Reception, parents and children are welcomed in to 'stay and play'. Parents of children with SEND are invited to additional sessions to help overcome worries about starting school. This helps staff to build a detailed understanding of what each child needs.

Leaders' vision for what pupils should achieve is not yet embedded in practice. They have not been rigorous enough in identifying and addressing barriers to pupils' achievement. Staff feel well supported with regard to workload and opportunities for development. However, professional learning for staff has not established consistent expertise in delivering the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not yet established assessment practices fully across the school. As a result, teachers do not pick up on some misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to make sure that they put in place consistent systems and processes for verifying what pupils have understood.
- The tasks and explanations that teachers provide are not sufficiently precise in connecting new knowledge with what pupils have learned before. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to retain and apply what they have learned. Leaders

should ensure that teachers consider carefully what pupils already know and can do when providing work and explaining important ideas.

- Too many pupils are absent from school, especially those who are disadvantaged. As a result, pupils miss out on more of their learning than they should. Leaders need to ensure that attendance and catching up on missed learning are at the heart of their wider strategy around raising attainment and outcomes.
- Leaders have not focused closely enough on addressing inconsistencies in how teachers deliver learning. As a result, the professional development programme does not lead to teachers delivering learning well for all pupils. Leaders must ensure that they use professional learning to drive forward improvements in teachers' practice, especially around pedagogy and assessment.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	118711
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321855
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Harrison
Headteacher	Catherine Maynard
Website	www.langafel.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This is designated for pupils with autism and provides places for 30 pupils.
- 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with school leaders, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also met representatives from the local governing body and spoke with representatives from the diocese and the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, history and English. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND and sampled work from other areas of the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Daniel Botting, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Long

Ofsted Inspector

Louise Walker

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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