

# Langley Hall Primary Academy

Station Road, Langley, Berkshire SL3 8GW

## Inspection dates

16–17 November 2016

<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	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been tackled thoroughly. As a result, the school's effectiveness has significantly strengthened in a short space of time.
- Governors, staff, parents and pupils recognise the positive changes made. They agree that the school has improved notably.
- Safeguarding is effective. All staff and governors have received the latest training, meeting their statutory responsibilities well. Pupils say that they feel safe.
- Leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching is now consistently good. Most teachers now plan well for the differing range of pupils' needs in their classes.
- Pupils' achievement has improved. Most now do well in reading, writing and mathematics and reach the standard expected. Some exceed the expected standards, although too many of the most able disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as much as they could because tasks do not always challenge them sufficiently.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their needs are met well.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils attain highly in a range of subjects, including physical education, art, drama and music.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. They exhibit high levels of enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils attend school regularly. They enjoy the wide range of activities on offer and achieve high standards across the curriculum.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Classrooms are a hive of harmonious activity. Children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Governors have supported leaders steadfastly during the school's improvement journey from special measures. They have played their part well, embracing the support of others, in order to develop their skills and expertise rapidly.
- The governors focus closely on the school's most important priorities for improvement. They make good use of a range of evidence to check the impact of leaders. However, their reference to information about the progress of different groups of pupils, and the impact of the curriculum, is not always sharp enough for them to challenge leaders fully.

## **Full report**

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

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

- Further strengthen the quality of governance by making sure that governors:
  - make greater use of pupil performance information, including that related to groups such as disadvantaged pupils, to challenge school leaders
  - review the impact of the school's religious education programme review, including the difference it makes to enhancing pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Improve the attainment of the most able disadvantaged pupils by ensuring that teaching provides consistent challenge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection, the executive headteacher has galvanised the Langley Hall team, providing principled and highly focused leadership. Aply supported by other senior leaders and governors, she has overhauled many aspects of the school's work. Leaders have tightened the school's safeguarding procedures, tackled variability in teaching effectively, raised standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and greatly improved communication with parents. Shrewd modifications to the school's approach have led to rapid improvement in the effectiveness of safeguarding, the quality of teaching and higher achievement for pupils.
- Staff who spoke to inspectors are equally positive about the transformation leaders have made since the previous inspection, particularly to enhancing the culture of safeguarding. New initiatives, such as a weekly safeguarding briefing from the school's designated safeguarding lead, ensure that everyone has the latest guidance and is kept well informed. Staff know and understand their safeguarding responsibilities fully.
- Leaders have resolutely set about improving the quality of teaching, apportioning responsibility more widely so that the monitoring of teaching by the heads of school, year-group and subject leaders is making an increased impact. Leaders hold teachers more strongly to account than in the past for their performance, so standards are rising.
- At the beginning of this term, leaders appointed a member of staff with responsibility for coaching and mentoring, strengthening the school's capacity to improve quickly. Working alongside teachers, the mentor provides well-targeted additional support, making certain that teachers are clear on how to improve their skills and expertise. Staff have benefited from additional training and support. This has resulted in more consistent expectations, pupils making better progress and a strong sense of collaboration and teamwork.
- In June 2016, leaders implemented a comprehensive action plan in order to tackle previous weaknesses head on. Much has been achieved in a short space of time, although there are also areas still to work on. Actions are appropriate and the plan prioritises the right things at the right time.
- Senior leaders promote equality of opportunity well. They evaluate the performance of different groups of pupils effectively. Relevant action is taken to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed.
- Communication is effective. Leaders ensure that parents and staff are fully involved in what the school is trying to achieve. The school's vision and ethos are communicated clearly. For example, parents are fully aware of the school's priorities, such as changes made to the school's behaviour policy. Equally, staff now meet more regularly, including teaching assistants. Everyone shares leaders' ambition for high standards.

- Following a review of pupil premium funding, leaders have implemented well-judged changes in approach. Leaders now meet more regularly with staff, reviewing through a sharp lens the progress of the school's disadvantaged pupils. As a result, when pupil performance dips, leaders are quick to instigate appropriate support. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school's provision for the most able disadvantaged pupils requires greater attention, as these pupils do not always achieve the high standards of which they are capable.
- The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of modern British society. Pupils act as the returning officers in school council elections, experiencing democracy first hand. Following on from a Remembrance Day assembly, pupils in the lower school thoughtfully considered the significance of the poppy. Values such as tolerance and respect are evident in all aspects of the school's work and pupils demonstrate high levels of social awareness and responsibility.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Physical education and sport funding is used effectively. There is a wide-ranging menu of extra-curricular activities and the school is a hive of activity. The teaching of music is excellent and musical instrument tuition is popular. Pupils particularly enjoy participating in whole-school productions, such as the forthcoming Year 5 and Year 6 musical.
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural education is supported well. Nevertheless, work to promote pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures is underdeveloped. Assemblies are beginning to promote pupils' awareness of other cultures more strongly but it is too soon to see impact. A helpful review of the school's religious education programme is planned for later this term.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have responded swiftly to the previous inspection, supporting school leaders wholeheartedly. Governors rightly note that the last inspection has helped bring about significant improvement, particularly to the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. Governors have played their part, conveying the strong belief that, 'the school is now a much stronger place than before'.
- Governors reacted promptly to the previous inspection, reviewing the school's safeguarding policies and procedures straightaway. In addition, many governors completed beneficial training covering aspects including radicalisation and safer recruitment. As a result, governors are knowledgeable and fully conversant with current government guidance. This means that they are able to challenge school leaders more effectively. Furthermore, not content with simply agreeing new policies, governors make checks for themselves. They assure themselves that staff apply in practice what governors have agreed. For example, governors undertake regular monitoring of the school's single central record, checking that all adults are safe to work with children. Governors are now meeting their statutory duties well in this regard.

- The governing body responded positively to the priorities identified in the previous inspection report and commissioned a review of its work. It has tackled the areas identified comprehensively and with resolve. In addition, governors have also completed an audit of their collective skills and expertise. They are determined to strengthen their effectiveness rapidly. For example, minutes of governors' meetings now clearly document all aspects of their work. Training, such as that recently attended on exclusions, has developed governors' understanding of statutory guidance.
- Governors have begun to make greater use of pupil performance information. They receive helpful information from school leaders. However, their understanding of the achievement of specific groups of pupils, including of disadvantaged pupils, is not good enough for them to hold leaders fully to account.
- The governing body is determined to ensure that being well informed characterises their work. In recent times, they have sought to become more outward looking. For example, governors now attend the Slough health and safety forum so they know more about the safety requirements placed on all schools.
- Governors understand their financial responsibilities fully. They actively seek value for money, looking ahead to plan for the future. In addition, statutory duties are met well and governors regularly review key documents, including the school's pay policy.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- In the last six months, leaders have reviewed all aspects of the school's approach, making good use of support from other professionals. The headteacher has taken a strong lead in ensuring that all systems and procedures are regularly updated and thorough. For example, leaders commissioned an outside agency to audit all staff personnel files. Findings confirmed that all checks on adults' suitability to work with children are fully in place. Leaders' now high level of scrutiny ensures that systems are working well.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained and up to speed with the latest government guidance. All staff have read part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- The school's designated person has worked diligently to ensure that all staff have the required expertise and up-to-date knowledge. Weekly briefings are circulated and staff meet often to discuss concerns. Staff training and induction procedures, including for temporary staff, ensure that all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and know how to keep pupils safe. Safeguarding pupils effectively is top of everyone's list.
- As staff awareness has developed, responsiveness to pupils' needs has also improved. Staff implement the school's early help procedures fully. This means that families requiring additional help are identified promptly and benefit from useful support.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have successfully tackled inconsistency in teaching. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and across different year groups, the degree of variability has diminished. Teaching is now consistently good.
- Leaders' support for teachers, including those who are newly qualified, is now much more responsive. This means that when teachers' skills are identified as requiring development, training needs are addressed more promptly than in the past. As a result, the quality of teaching continues to improve steadily.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Pupils attain well. In lessons, most pupils are eager to improve their work, offering helpful suggestions. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils interjected during a shared writing session, offering alternative word choices. They generated tension successfully by selecting 'tiptoeing' instead of 'walking'.
- Teachers' planning is effective in most respects. For example, teachers plan writing tasks thoughtfully, providing pupils with regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Pupils are very enthusiastic writers and display a growing proficiency in a range of genres, including stories, poetry and report-writing.
- Positive, nurturing relationships between teachers and pupils are commonplace. Pupils understand what is expected and try hard to improve their skills. They listen attentively to instructions and teachers check carefully that pupils have understood. In most cases, teachers spot misunderstandings or uncertainties quickly so pupils learn well.
- Typically, teachers have high expectations. They plan effectively, using pupil performance information well to provide activities that cater appropriately for the differing ability groups in their classes. Nevertheless, they do not always expect enough of the most able pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, or provide stretching work.
- Leaders have restated their expectations and revised the school's approach to providing feedback to pupils. Teachers now have higher expectations, including of the accuracy that pupils achieve when spelling tricky words. Teachers usually spot pupils' errors or misunderstandings and offer helpful guidance. Pupils respond well and work hard to improve their grasp of spelling and punctuation rules. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing is going from strength to strength.
- Leaders have reviewed the school's mathematics curriculum, developing resourcing appropriately. Teachers display a secure subject knowledge and emphasise mathematical vocabulary effectively. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to use terms such as 'divisor', 'quotient' and 'dividend' when solving division problems. With support from subject leaders, teachers now plan activities that include a greater level of challenge. As a result, the teaching of mathematics has improved and the most able pupils are working at greater depth. Pupils, including the most able, achieve well.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. They understand their role more fully and actively engage in supporting groups or individuals well in lessons. However, a degree of variability persists in the quality of questioning from additional adults.
- Pupils read widely and often. Reading is promoted well and book corners in every classroom signify the importance of this aspect. Pupils enjoy visiting the school's library, regularly taking out books for enjoyment.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The comprehensive review of the school's safeguarding procedures and policies has ensured that keeping pupils safe is now at the forefront of all adults' work. Staff are fully aware of their duties, demonstrating appropriate levels of care and vigilance and exemplifying the mantra, 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility'. For example, following a suggestion from a member of staff, pupils are dismissed after extra-curricular activities wearing high-visibility vests. Procedures are suitably adapted to account for a range of factors, including the darker evenings at this time of year. Greater acknowledgement of shared responsibility ensures that staff adapt procedures more readily to ensure that pupils' safety is a priority.
- Leaders have maintained the improvement to pupils' attendance seen in the last academic year. Attendance is broadly average. The small proportion of pupils who find regular attendance difficult are supported well to attend more regularly. From time to time, due to the challenges of the split site, some pupils arrive late to the first activities of the day.
- Pupils feel safe. They have confidence in the adults who care for them. Teachers equip pupils well to know what bullying is and what to do if a situation were to become troubling. For example, pupils in Year 3 were able to tell an inspector about how they use their 'power of good' to intervene if there are minor fall-outs between peers.
- A culture of vigilance means that everyone plays their part in safeguarding pupils. The sharing of key information is now more systematic. For example, pupils' medical care plans are regularly updated and easily accessible in classrooms.
- Leaders track the number of incidents carefully. This allows leaders to make well-judged improvements to practices when necessary. For example, better management of the key stage 1 playground has reduced the number of accidents significantly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Parents rightly say that behaviour in the school is good. Those who spoke to an inspector were clear about the high standard of conduct expected of pupils.
- Leaders have revised the school's behaviour policy this term, re-stating their expectations, and including amending the school's rewards and sanctions. Because expectations are understood, most pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school, and follow established routines. Pupils usually respond quickly to instructions from adults. Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful and positive.
- Pupils take great care with their work. They are eager to improve their skills, responding well to the guidance they receive from their teachers.

- Leaders track behavioural incidents carefully, analysing trends and patterns. Using this information, leaders follow up more regularly to ensure that pupils are safe. Other insightful modifications, such as increasing supervision at the beginning and end of the day, are making a positive difference.
- Pupils work productively, enjoy their lessons and learn well. They are appreciative of the greater emphasis on 'tricky work', telling an inspector, 'it gives you more of a challenge and you learn more'.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Since opening in 2011, the school has sharply grown in size, with many pupils joining at different points in the primary phase. Over the last academic year, numbers have stabilised as growth has slowed. More children now start in the Reception classes, moving through the school year on year. This means that the school is just beginning to see the full impact of its work in promoting pupils' learning effectively.
- In a short space of time, and because of leaders' tenacious approach to improving the quality of teaching, standards have risen considerably. Teachers now make greater use of pupil performance information to plan activities that cater well for pupils' differing needs. As a result, achievement for most groups of pupils, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, is good.
- Unvalidated assessment information for 2016 shows that standards in key stage 1 and key stage 2 compare favourably with the national picture. In reading, writing and mathematics, the proportion of pupils who achieved the standard expected for their age at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 in 2016 was slightly above that seen nationally.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Most join the school with skills and understanding typical of their age. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. A few join with below-typical starting points and make rapid progress. More children achieved a good level of development in 2016 than in 2015. Standards are rising and are now in line with those seen nationally.
- Work in recent times to improve the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has had a marked impact. In 2016, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Many achieved standards in line with their peers. Furthermore, some made rapid gains and exceeded the standard expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well overall. Most make similar progress as other pupils nationally and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress is slower for the most able disadvantaged pupils, and too few achieve the higher standard, particularly in key stage 2, of which they are capable.
- Leaders are committed to all pupils achieving well. They now more rigorously scrutinise the achievement of all pupils, for example, by gender, ability grouping and/or ethnic heritage. Previous gaps in reading and writing attainment for some groups, such as for girls in the early years, have closed completely. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

- Pupils achieve high standards in other subjects, particularly physical education and music. For example, many pupils in key stage 1 can confidently swim a length, a skill pupils are expected to master by the end of Year 6. When singing, pupils display mastery of complex musical techniques such as phrasing and the use of dynamics.
- In 2016, standards in Year 1 phonics were slightly below those seen nationally. However, current pupils in the early years and key stage 1 are making good progress with the acquisition of early reading skills. Pupils who read to inspectors were able to read fluently, demonstrating a good grasp of the skills needed for success.
- Because of higher expectations of pupils, pupils' spelling is improving rapidly. In 2016, pupils achieved well, achieving an average spelling score slightly above that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils that achieved the standard expected for their age in the key stage 2 English, grammar, punctuation and spelling test was above that seen nationally.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Communication with parents has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning and all other matters, including those relating to keeping children safe. Parents who spoke to an inspector commented that communication between school and home is excellent. Parents are confident that their children are safe, happy and learning well.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The leader knows the department well. Leaders ensure that improvement work focuses on the right areas. For example, changes to the way in which early reading skills are taught have ensured that girls achieved as well boys in 2016.
- Standards are rising. In 2016, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development increased and was in line with that seen nationally. More children start key stage 1 with the skills and understanding typical for their age. However, leaders acknowledge that preparing all groups well for key stage 1, including boys and the disadvantaged, remains a key priority, and they are well focused on making further improvements to teaching.
- Children are enthused by learning. They feel confident and understand what is expected. Teachers bolster children's confidence readily, encouraging them to contribute their ideas, offering praise and encouragement. In turn, children enjoy appealing activities and make good progress in all aspects of learning. One child told an inspector, 'Sometimes we have really difficult things to do, but I like that.'
- Children make good progress with their personal development and social skills. They share, take turns and work collaboratively. As a result, children get the most out of their activities, such as when dressing up as astronauts and planning a journey to the moon.
- Teachers plan effectively. In classes, teachers achieve an appropriate balance between adult-led activities and those instigated by children. Opportunities to promote the acquisition of language and number skills are embedded throughout the school day. For example, during the inspection, children made good progress in their mastery of counting skills when creating a tally chart to show how adults travel to work.

- Adults support children's learning well. High-quality support promotes children's communication skills, including those of children who speak English as an additional language. Early writing opportunities are promoted effectively and children hone their skills quickly, such as when writing signs for the 'car wash'.
- Children are encouraged to develop their early reading skills. Recent staff training has made a positive difference. The teaching of phonics is effective as teachers and adults have secure subject knowledge. Children readily transfer their skills to their writing, sounding out words carefully and experiencing a high degree of success.

## School details

Unique reference number	136951
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10021988

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	729
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Carleton
Executive headteacher	Sally Eaton
Telephone number	01753 580516
Website	<a href="http://www.lhpa.co.uk">www.lhpa.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@lhpa.co.uk">info@lhpa.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Since the previous inspection, the chair of the governing body has completed his term of office. A new chair was elected in September 2016. Several teachers left at the end of the summer term and several new teachers joined in September 2016.
- Langley Hall Primary Academy is much larger than an average-sized primary school. The academy free school, which started as a one-form entry school in 2011, has four classes in each year group.

- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is lower than in other schools nationally, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Three quarters of the school's population are from minority ethnic groups and over a half speak English as an additional language.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures at its previous inspection. Inspectors deemed the monitoring inspection a full section 5 inspection at the end of the second day.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the headteachers of the upper and lower schools, a group of staff and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority and four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed 32 lessons, including 31 jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at work in books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and also met with groups of pupils in the lower and upper schools.
- Parents' views were taken into account through face-to-face informal discussions before school and the school's recent parent questionnaire. One response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, was received during this inspection.
- Inspectors checked records and documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, minutes of meetings, staff appraisals and monitoring and improvement.
- Inspectors reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

## Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector
Amanda Gard	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Orme	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Marshall	Ofsted Inspector

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