

# Inspection of Larkrise Primary School

Dorset Avenue, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9UB

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Katie Allen. This school is part of Eveleigh LINK Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joseph Figg, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sara Kightley.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The vision of 'Learning Together Achieving Excellence' is at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils are proud to attend the school and are happy. Adults know the pupils well. This means pupils feel safe and their social and emotional needs are well met.

The new curriculum reflects high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers select learning activities that are well matched to their needs. This helps pupils to learn and remember more.

Adults expect pupils to behave well. This means the school is a calm and purposeful place. Pupils behave well in lessons and on the playground. Adults provide effective support if low-level disruption occurs for those who need it. Pupils state bullying is rare, and adults deal with any issues quickly.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This includes sports, creative and music clubs. Those in leadership roles, such as the school council, have a positive impact on improving aspects of school life for others. Trips such as those to Colchester Castle and the Science Museum bring learning to life.

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

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum. There is now a clearer understanding of the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn. The well-designed curriculum enables pupils to achieve well.

The school has prioritised the quality of education in English, mathematics and science. Consequently, teachers are more confident and knowledgeable about how to teach these subjects well. However, in some other areas of the curriculum, while teachers know what they need to deliver and how, teachers do not routinely check what pupils know before they are moved on to new learning. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Reading is a priority across the school. Staff are experts in delivering phonics. Pupils enjoy reading. They start to learn to read as soon as they start school. Regular checks allow teachers to identify those who need help and provide support. Books are well matched to pupils' reading ability. The school encourages pupils to read at home with parents. Pupils have access to a range of authors and types of books. Pupils become confident and fluent readers.

The school has a significant number of pupils with SEND. Leaders have secure systems in place to identify pupils' needs and provide high-quality support to help pupils successfully access the curriculum. This includes seeking relevant support from external agencies. Pupils follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have ensured that staff have the expertise to provide the support pupils need. Pupils develop confidence and learn to the best of their ability.

In early years, there is a detailed curriculum in place that ensures children learn the knowledge they need to achieve well. Learning activities are well suited to children's needs. Staff encourage the development of knowledge, communication and social skills. Leaders work effectively with parents. This contributes towards the youngest children being well prepared for Year 1.

Clear behaviour expectations promote pupils to have positive attitudes to learning. Lessons typically proceed without disruption. Leaders have worked hard to improve the attendance of pupils who regularly do not attend school. They work with parents to identify and remove possible barriers to attending school. However, there are still pupils who miss too many lessons.

Leaders have prioritised developing pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Visits to local churches and mosques, combined with cultural experience days, enhance learning. Pupils understand the concepts of equality and diversity. Pupils can discuss being inclusive and accepting everyone as individuals. Pupils are taught the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. Pupils develop their understanding of positive relationships.

Leaders have a clear vision for the school. They have adopted a strategic approach to improvement. For example, the development of 'The Hive' supports and engages parents. The Nurture Room provides pupils with help to manage their well-being and emotions. These additions in the school have had a positive impact on pupils' and parents' attitudes towards school.

Governors and the trust work well together to challenge and support school leaders. They make regular visits to the school to check what they are told so they can hold leaders to account effectively. As a result, governors have a realistic and precise view of the school's strengths and areas to develop further.

Staff are supported well and enjoy working at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some areas of the curriculum, the guidance to support teachers to check what pupils have learned is not as precise and clear. When this is the case, teachers are not as certain about what pupils know. Consequently, they move pupils on to new learning before they are ready. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school should make sure that assessment in all curriculum areas is

precise, so teachers are clear about how to check what pupils know and remember. Teachers need support to use assessment well to inform the delivery of the curriculum equally as well in all subject areas.

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means pupils miss their learning and, consequently, develop gaps in their knowledge. The school should continue to develop its approach to ensure all pupils have high attendance.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143124
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345442
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	188
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sara Kightley
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Joseph Figg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katie Allen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.larkrise.essex.sch.uk">www.larkrise.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Eveleigh LINK Academy Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes to staffing and leadership at the school.
- The school does not use any off-site alternative education 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors held meetings with leaders, including members of the trust board, the local governing body, senior leaders, the chief executive officer from the trust, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; examined safeguarding records; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including school policies, the school development plan, the self-evaluation form and minutes from meetings of the local governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils to gather their views throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing the 29 responses, including 27 free-text responses, submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and reviewed the 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Rob James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Laura Hewer

Ofsted Inspector

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