

Inspection of Long Crendon School

Chilton Road, Long Crendon, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 9BZ

Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this thriving school. They understand the school's values, such as unity and resilience, deeply. They value the many roles and responsibilities they have, such as 'ambassadors', house captains and school councillors. From the start of their time in the Reception Year, children benefit from caring relationships and opportunities to foster their independence. Pupils enjoy the many resources available to them, such as the heated swimming pool and outdoor learning area, which are used effectively to help pupils learn well.

The school develops pupils' talents and interests in an exemplary way. Pupils develop confidence and a love of music and the arts through regular opportunities to perform to others. Music provision is a particular strength. Pupils learn instruments, such as the drums and guitar, and singing throughout the curriculum. Pupils love their 'gig assemblies' each week, showcasing their musical talents to parents and carers and their peers. Pupils behave very well.

By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics. Staff have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. Disadvantaged pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are placed at the forefront of the school's ambition for all pupils to succeed. Pupils are very well prepared for their next stages of education.

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

Pupils are motivated. They have positive attitudes to their learning. In Reception, children make a very strong start. The curriculum is planned and sequenced expertly. Staff prioritise social development and communication and language. Children settle into routines quickly, take turns and reflect the school's values strongly. Staff subject knowledge in the early years is incredibly strong. Teaching is fully used to help create children's joy and confidence in learning, and their readiness for key stage 1.

The curriculum is ambitious. Staff have identified the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn across all subjects. Lessons are sequenced logically to help pupils to learn effectively. For example, in music pupils learn about basic rhythm, crotchets, rests and quavers before more complex learning about chord charts and notation. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly. The curriculum is adapted skilfully to help ensure that pupils with SEND succeed.

Pupils are clear about how lessons help them to remember what has been taught in the previous lesson and the previous week. However, at times staff do not always check some pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum fully effectively. Some pupils in some subject areas are not as secure in their understanding of what has been taught and then do not build on their prior knowledge as securely as they could. This means that they do not achieve as highly as they could in these subjects.

Staff are passionate about teaching reading. There is a strong culture of developing pupils' love of books and literature. Phonics teaching is excellent. Phonics is taught daily, and interwoven into the curriculum, helping pupils to learn well. Reading books are matched closely to the sounds they have learned. If any pupils fall behind, they receive expert support quickly. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' outcomes in reading are consistently strong.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. Staff apply the recently revised behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Pupils hold doors open for each other, say thank you and take time to ask questions and listen carefully to each other's answers. There is no low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils attend school regularly. If any pupil is at risk of lower attendance, the school works closely with families to overcome barriers and secure regular attendance. Pupils feel safe and understand the school's rules for behaviour clearly.

Clubs, trips and extra-curricular activities contribute to pupils' social and cultural development very meaningfully. Pupils benefit from the many high-quality opportunities that the school provides. School clubs such as chess, tennis, dance and drama help pupils to grow in confidence. School trips and educational visits make the most of the school's rural environment. Pupils say that they 'connect with nature', for example learning to whittle, press apples and working as part of a team during their outdoor learning experiences. Pupils feel safe. The school's focus on 'dreams and goals' for pupils, including through residential trips in key stage 2, helps pupils to persevere and feel mentally and physically healthy.

Governors support and challenge the school effectively. The school engages with staff effectively to support workload and well-being, which supports teaching positively. Staff are overwhelmingly proud of the togetherness and impact of the positive changes brought about since the school's previous inspection. Parents appreciate the incredible work of the staff team, with clear recognition of the exceptionally positive impact of the school's recently appointed senior leadership team.

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 subjects, the school's use of assessment is not always as effective as it could be. At times, staff do not identify whether pupils know and understand the intended curriculum securely. As a result, a small number of pupils do not build on their prior knowledge as effectively as they could. The school should continue to refine its approach, ensuring staff check pupils' knowledge efficiently and effectively, making suitable adjustments to lessons and the curriculum where needed.

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	110338
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10341285
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elizabeth Guerin
Headteacher	Gareth Owens
Website	www.longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions.
- The headteacher was appointed to the school in May 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the headteacher, the chair of governors, members of the local governing body, a representative of the local authority and other senior staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interest first.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- The inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Leah Morgan

Ofsted Inspector

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