

Inspection of a good school: Luddenham School

Luddenham, Faversham, Kent ME13 0TE

Inspection dates:

3 to 4 July 2024

Outcome

Luddenham School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Claire Vincett. This school is part of a single-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dominic Deeson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils grow in confidence at this friendly school where everyone knows and cares for each other. Parents are positive about the school, which they describe as having a community feel. One parent summed up the views of many saying, 'This is a school which is invested in the potential of the children.'

Pupils are open, engaging and keen to talk. They are proud of their leadership opportunities such as being part of the site team, a reading ambassador or a play leader. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They are confident that there is always someone to help to resolve any problems or concerns.

Pupils enjoy playtimes. The expansive and well-resourced grounds offer a wealth of opportunities to climb or join in with games. Inviting spaces support imaginative play and exploration that helps to keep pupils active. Pupils are supported to build positive relationships, recognising the importance of being kind and considerate to one another.

Expectations of pupils' attendance and conduct are high. Pupils regularly attend school and behave well in lessons. Staff kindly reinforce what is expected of all pupils, including the youngest children in Reception. Pupils respond well. They listen to their teachers and follow instructions. Classrooms are orderly places where pupils work hard and learn well.

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

The school has focused successfully on developing an interesting and engaging curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge in each subject. Much of the curriculum is well sequenced,

where pupils' learning is organised in logical steps. In most year groups, there is a clear focus on ensuring pupils have the knowledge they need for the next stage of their education. The school recognises this is not yet the case for the youngest children in Reception. Here, the early years curriculum is not always as precisely considered as it could be to ensure children have the knowledge they need in readiness for Year 1.

Staff are well trained and have strong subject knowledge. They use this to check what pupils remember of their prior learning and then recap as needed. These processes are particularly well embedded in English and mathematics. This helps staff to identify and address where pupils have gaps in their understanding before moving on to new learning. Leaders recognise that these processes are not yet securely in place in other subjects. This work is continuing to help pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils take pleasure in their reading. Learning to read is a priority and a renewed focus on phonics and reading in key stage 1 has raised attainment. Pupils learn phonics as soon as they join Reception and are provided with books that reinforce the sounds that they are learning. Regular checks identify any pupils who start to fall behind so that they can be given the help that they need to catch up quickly. The school has carefully selected a wide range of books which are used in regular 'novel study' sessions. Pupils develop their vocabulary and deepen their knowledge about the stories and characters they explore. Pupils enjoy these sessions and engage eagerly with the regular story time, book-sharing assemblies and holiday reading challenges.

The school responded swiftly to lower-than-national published outcomes in mathematics. The curriculum has been revised and a focus on multiplication has improved pupils' knowledge of number facts effectively. Pupils are increasingly confident and competent mathematicians. They enjoy the challenges they are given and set their work out clearly to show their thinking.

The school's clear behaviour policy is well understood and consistently applied by staff. This helps pupils to recognise and understand what is expected of them. Where pupils need additional help to manage their behaviour, the school provides support and works closely with outside agencies as needed. This process is also in place to support any pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff take time to identify each pupil's individual needs and then ensure appropriate action is taken to help pupils with SEND learn and achieve well.

The programme for pupils' personal development is well developed. In addition to the planned curriculum, pupils' different school experiences are underpinned by the school's FLIGHT values of 'fairness, leadership, imagination, grit, honesty and teamwork'. Pupils keenly focus on these. They value the ways they are recognised for demonstrating them, such as 'Hot Choc Friday' or being awarded Fred the FLIGHT flamingo.

Trustees know the school well. They have ensured that they are provided with an appropriate range of information to hold the school to account effectively. They take the right steps to help ensure that pupils are kept safe and that they learn well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the foundation subjects, teachers are not yet consistently checking what knowledge pupils can remember and then apply to new learning. Pupils therefore are not always able to build accurately on what they already know. The school should continue to implement how they assess what pupils know to support pupils' achievement across the whole curriculum.
- The curriculum in early years does not always precisely ensure children have the knowledge they need in readiness for the different subjects they will explore in key stage 1. The school should continue to develop the early years curriculum to identify the knowledge and skills that will help prepare children for the next stage of their education.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2019.

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	138034
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321951
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dominic Deeson
Headteacher	Claire Vincett
Website	www.luddenham.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 February 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- The school is part of a single-academy trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with school leaders. The lead inspector also talked to representatives of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys and considered a letter from a parent.
- The inspector talked to staff to gather their views about the school, including their workload and well-being. The inspector met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons, at playtimes and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Deborah Perkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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