

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Lodge Lane Infant School

Lodge Lane, Old Catton, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 7HL

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 May 2025

Outcome

Lodge Lane Infant School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Rebecca Dewing. This school is part of the Wensum Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Daniel Thrower, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Smith.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have a strong sense of belonging at Lodge Lane Infant School. Each class has a daily 'morning meeting'. Pupils greet each other, share news and refresh their memories about previous learning. Pupils celebrate each other's birthdays and achievements in whole school assemblies. They play together harmoniously in the school's extensive outdoor spaces. This is a happy, friendly school.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils try hard to show the school's values of kindness, teamwork, challenge, respect, curiosity and perseverance. They work hard and strive to meet staff's expectations. As a result, classrooms are calm learning environments. Pupils are highly engaged by the school's 'imaginative inquiry' approach to learning. This inspires pupils to learn through drama, storytelling and practical experiences. Overall, pupils achieve very well.

A range of enrichment activities enthuse and inform pupils about the world beyond Lodge Lane. These enhance the curriculum and build pupils' character. For example, Year 2 pupils develop their confidence and learn teamwork skills at an outdoor adventure centre in readiness for the transition to junior school. During the inspection, children in the Reception Year immersed themselves in animal-related play in preparation for a visit to a nearby farm.

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

The school has developed a broad, balanced and creative curriculum. It sets out clearly what pupils should learn and identifies the key language they need for each subject. The early years curriculum lays the foundations for children's later learning. In subjects such as history, geography and science, the curriculum is driven by 'inquiry stories'. Teachers use drama effectively to bring these to life. They capture pupils' imaginations and give them a reason for learning.

The school promotes a love of reading. In the Reception Year, for example, children hear stories that motivate them to find out more about particular topics. Books inspire children to write messages, find out about objects from the past and extend their language around emotions. In daily phonics sessions, pupils in all year groups learn the letters, sounds and spelling patterns they need to become independent readers and writers. Staff are well trained. They deliver these sessions effectively and with consistency. Most pupils can read fluently by the time they leave the school.

Staff are skilled at spotting pupils who need additional support to keep up with learning. If pupils need extra help with phonics, staff ensure that this is provided in a timely and targeted way. Across the curriculum, staff check pupils' learning often. They identify pupils' needs and adapt their teaching to meet these. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well understood. The school sets clear, achievable targets for them. It puts provision in place that enables them to access the curriculum. Some pupils with SEND learn in the school's 'Butterflies' room. They receive personalised support and an individualised curriculum. This enables them to learn well at a pace that is appropriate for them.

Typically, staff use effective teaching approaches. They provide clear explanations and use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding or challenge pupils to think more deeply. The links teachers make between subjects through the inquiry approach help pupils to strengthen their learning. However, at times, there are inconsistencies in the way staff use their checks on pupils' learning to help pupils to improve. Sometimes, the feedback staff provide is not meaningful to pupils. In some cases, it may be adding to teachers' workload.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is deliberately thought out to offer them experiences they might not otherwise have. Pupils hone their musical skills and grow their confidence by performing at external events, such as the Norfolk Music Festival. They develop a sense of citizenship by taking part in community initiatives, such as the Royal British Legion's 90th anniversary celebrations. In the school's woodland area, pupils learn to take managed risks. They climb trees, build dens and find out about bushcraft.

The school's local advisory board (LAB) has grown in strength since the last inspection. Its members, known as governors, know the school well. They check that the school is making progress against its priorities and provide support where this is needed. Trustees and trust leaders have an ambitious vision for the school. They ensure that any decisions

made, such as the establishment of the school's 'Butterflies' room, are in the best interests of pupils. The trust provides appropriate support and training for staff. These motivate staff and ensure that they are suitably skilled to carry out their roles effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are occasional inconsistencies in the way teachers use their checks on pupils' learning to respond to errors or misconceptions. These are not always as effective as they could be, and, in some cases, may involve unnecessary workload. The school and trust should ensure that they support staff to adopt consistent and efficient approaches to assessing pupils' learning, providing clear and direct feedback that leads to improvements, so that pupils progress as well as possible through the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 third ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Lodge Lane Infant School, to be good for overall effectiveness in October 2011.

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	143988
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10378563
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Smith
CEO of the trust	Daniel Thrower
Headteacher	Rebecca Dewing
Website	www.wensumtrust.org.uk/lodgelane
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Wensum Trust.
- The school shares its headteacher and LAB with another school in the trust, Garrick Green Infant School.
- The school runs its own internal specially resourced provision for pupils with complex SEND.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school offers wraparound care before and after school, as well as during the school holidays.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and the primary strategic lead from the trust. The inspector also met with a group of governors and trustees, including the CEO and the chair of trustees.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, listened to some pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documentation and policies. These included the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation form and minutes of LAB meetings.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She reviewed the responses to the online staff survey. In addition, the inspector spoke with pupils and staff to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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