

Long Field Academy

Ambleside Way, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0BN

Inspection dates

2–3 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

a school that requires improvement

- A few pupils are still not achieving as well as they should. School leaders have identified the right priorities and improved much of the school quickly. However, some actions have not had sufficient time to be fully effective.
- A few disadvantaged pupils, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, have not caught up with their peers.
- A few more-able pupils are not making the progress they are capable of because teachers do not always have high enough expectations for what they can achieve.
- A few pupils who access additional courses provided by the Melton Behaviour Partnership are not making as much progress as they should.
- Across all year groups, and in different subjects, pupils do not always present work neatly, or take enough care over their handwriting. Some make spelling errors, because they are not always corrected and because not all teachers have high enough expectations for this aspect of pupils' work.

The school has the following strengths

- The Principal provides effective leadership and has ensured that all staff are working together as a strong team. The school has improved quickly within a short space of time.
- Senior leaders, teachers who have responsibility for subjects and the governors are providing good support for the rapid improvement that is taking place.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibility for many aspects of the school. Those spoken to during the inspection appreciated the positive changes that have taken place, especially during this school year.
- Pupils, staff and most parents recognise that behaviour has improved and that expectations are higher across many areas.
- Attendance has improved because the school's systems to challenge absence are effective. Pupils feel positive about their learning and are keen to come to school.
- School leaders, including governors, have introduced clear systems for checking how well pupils are doing.
- The sponsors, the Spencer Academies Trust, have provided good support and made a good contribution to this improving school.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further by ensuring that:
 - the work given to the most-able pupils always enables them to make as much progress as they can
 - work in lessons, and extra support provided, enables disadvantaged pupils who are behind their peers to make more rapid progress, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9
 - the expectations that teachers have for presentation of work, handwriting and spelling are always high enough.

- Improve the progress of a few pupils who receive tuition through the Melton Behaviour Partnership by:
 - ensuring that systems for checking the progress of pupils on these courses always provide clear and timely information about how well they are doing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The Principal has led the recent transformation of many aspects of the school with skill and determination. Much of the school has improved rapidly. Clear systems have been introduced to check on quality. They have had a positive effect in a short space of time. This has led to better behaviour, attitudes to learning and improving standards of work.
- Relationships within the school are very positive. The staff who completed a survey as part of the inspection and the pupils spoken to recognise, and appreciate, the positive changes that have been made following the previous inspection. They feel that rapid progress has been made in many aspects of the school since September 2015 and feel that leaders have created a strong sense of teamwork.
- A parent stated that 'there has been a considerable improvement in the leadership of the school in a short period of time.' Most parents agree with this view.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection particularly appreciated that there were now fewer supply teachers and staff were approachable and friendly. They welcomed the fact that there were now permanent staff in place. They feel that school systems are clear and effective.
- Leaders have ensured that plans for improvement have the right priorities. Teaching staff benefit from good opportunities for additional training and support in order to improve their work further. This has contributed strongly to improved teaching. Leaders have high expectations for what can be achieved.
- The school provides a good range of subjects and there is an emphasis on improving key skills across many subjects. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. There is a good range of additional sporting and artistic activities for pupils. They are able to take part in trips that develop their skills and understanding further.
- Teachers who have responsibility for subjects are working well to improve learning and support each other. In some cases they are relatively new to the school, but have had a positive effect in a short amount of time. Each subject has a detailed plan for how to improve further and systems to check on progress are starting to have a positive effect.
- School leaders ensure that British values are promoted well through the everyday life of the school, expectations for conduct and the themes covered in assemblies and 'house' sessions. Relationships within the school are respectful and tolerant.
- Pupils have opportunities to experience different faiths, consider the lives of other people and study different cultures through humanities lessons and as part of the 'house' activities.
- Pupils and staff spoken to feel that the school now has a positive culture where there is little or no discrimination or derogatory behaviour and that any sort of prejudice would not be tolerated. Pupils and staff welcome the positive changes that have taken place.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are secure and the school works well with pupils who require additional support. Staff receive regular training. This helps them to understand the school's systems for keeping pupils safe, reporting any concerns they have and providing pupils with clear guidance and support.
- The academy sponsor, the Spencer Academies Trust, has provided effective support for the school. It has ensured that systems to improve the school are thorough, has provided additional training for school staff and has provided a good level of challenge and support for school leaders.
- Although improvement has been rapid, a few pupils are still not achieving good enough outcomes. This is mainly because there has been insufficient time for the actions taken by school leaders to be fully effective and because expectations still need to be higher within a few lessons.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a good range of skilled and experienced members. They hold school leaders to account for how well the school is doing and have made a good contribution to the improvements made. The governors receive clear information about how effective teaching is. They use this to make sure that the targets set for staff are matched well to the school's priorities. They also check that decisions about staff pay are matched to performance.
 - The governing body receives regular updates on the school. They have checked the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils and the catch-up funding for pupils who need additional support in Year 7. This has contributed to the improvements that have been made in these areas. They understand that there is more to do in order to ensure that all these pupils make enough progress.

- Governors have attended regular training in order to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. They check that arrangements to keep pupils safe, including checks on the suitability of staff, are carried out regularly and efficiently.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved across a wide range of subjects during this school year. Teachers have clear guidance on what is expected in each lesson and senior leaders regularly check to see that these are done well. The introductions of initiatives such as 'teach to the top' and 'non-negotiables' have had a positive effect on learning.
- Teachers plan the large majority of lessons thoroughly and increasingly effectively. Expectations for how pupils should behave in lessons are clear. Systems to reward good behaviour, and improve poor behaviour, are used well across all year groups and subjects. Pupils spoken to were positive about the changes that have taken place and feel they are treated fairly across different subject areas.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and understand the requirements for examination courses well. They use this information to check how well pupils are learning and plan additional support if required. This has led to recent rapid improvement in the progress made by Year 11 pupils in particular.
- Work is marked regularly and comments made by teachers are often helpful in improving the pupils' learning further. Homework is often used well to develop and build on learning further.
- Teachers regularly expect that pupils will try hard and improve their work. However, across different year groups and subjects teachers do not always ensure that pupils have sufficiently high expectations for neat presentation of their work, handwriting and correct spelling.
- In a few cases the more-able pupils have not received work that stretches them sufficiently and have not made as much progress as they should. This has been a school priority and many of these pupils are now doing better.
- A few disadvantaged pupils have not yet caught up with their peers, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, because over time expectations have not been high enough. This has been a school priority and an increasing proportion of these pupils, especially in Years 10 and 11, are now starting to catch up with their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and those spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the school. They appreciated the improvements that had been made, especially during this school year. They felt that although the school had been improving steadily since the last inspection, it had improved a lot this year.
- Pupils say that there is little or no bullying. They feel confident that if it occurred the school would help them to deal with it effectively. Pupils report that they are confident when moving around the school and feel safe and happy.
- Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, road safety and how to take exercise and eat healthily. They feel that the information they get from the school is appropriate and helpful.
- There are very good opportunities for a wide range of pupils to take responsibility for aspects of the school. These include Student Ambassadors, who act as representatives of the pupils, meet the Senior Leadership Team weekly and assist at parents evenings, school productions and presentation evenings. They are supported by student leaders across a wide range of subjects and aspects of school life.
- Older pupils have good opportunities to learn about different careers. They say they receive good support when planning the next stage of their education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils get on well with each other. Older pupils support the younger pupils and they are respectful towards each other.

- Pupils look after the school building and grounds. They are increasingly proud of the school and as a result there is little litter and no graffiti.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always good. The pupils spoken to, staff and the majority of parents recognise that it has improved. Pupils arrive to lessons on time and settle quickly to their work. They listen to each other and the teacher with respect. This improvement contributes to the better learning that is taking place.
- Pupils say that there is very little derogatory language used. They feel that if it is, the school has good systems in place to deal with it.
- Attendance has been below average for the past few years. Improvements in the school's systems to chase up those who are absent have resulted in current attendance now being average. All groups of pupils are attending more regularly and are on time for lessons because they feel more positive than they did about the school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- In the 2015 examinations too many pupils did not make good progress from their different starting points, especially in mathematics and science. Although the proportion of pupils obtaining five or more good grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was above average, this group of pupils started at the school with significantly higher attainment than average.
- In 2015 progress in English improved significantly compared to the previous year, although some groups of pupils, particularly boys, still did not do as well as they should have. Across the different year groups boys and girls are currently achieving equally well.
- Some more-able pupils did not achieve the grades that they should have. Some disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as their peers in the school, or other pupils nationally. However, the performance of both these groups improved in 2015 compared to the previous year.
- Although most pupils currently attending alternative courses are making good progress, a few are not. In some cases the information received by the school about their progress has not been clear enough. School leaders have tried to check progress but have not always been able to ensure that these pupils get back on track when they have fallen behind. This is particularly the case for a few pupils who access courses as part of the Melton Behaviour Partnership.
- In the 2015 examinations pupils achieved well in design and technology, languages and physical education. Current work seen and school data show that they are continuing to make good progress.
- Pupils start at the school with good reading skills and they have good opportunities to develop these further. They are also able to write with accurate and effective use of grammar. Across all year groups they do not always try their hardest to produce neat work that is presented well. Some of their handwriting is also too careless and they do not always give enough attention to correct spelling.
- Although pupils did not achieve well in mathematics in 2015, they are currently developing their confidence and skills much more securely across different year groups. This means that they are also able to use numbers and calculations with increasing confidence and accuracy across different subjects.
- Current information collected by the school about progress, along with work seen during the inspection, shows that much of the school is improving rapidly. This is because effective systems have been introduced to check progress and improve teaching. Much of this improvement is relatively recent.
- A few of the more-able pupils are still not doing as well as they should, even though this has been a priority for leaders and improvements have been made. Expectations for what they can achieve have improved but are still not always high enough. Some work is still too easy for them.
- A few of the disadvantaged pupils have not caught up with their peers because, although systems have been introduced to provide them with extra support and teachers are clear about the need to identify them when planning lessons, these improvements have not had sufficient time to have enough effect. This is especially the case in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. They receive additional support either in class or in the inclusion centre. Both of these are planned well.
- Pupils who start Year 7 with skills in English and mathematics that are below those expected for their age receive additional support in the morning, during 'house time' and after-school sessions. This is enabling the large majority to catch up with their peers by the end of their first term in the school.

School details

Unique reference number	
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10008110

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	539
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Marriott
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Christopher Haggett
Telephone number	01664 561234
Website	www.longfield.leics.sch.uk/
Email address	sstaff@longfield.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 September 2014

Information about this school

- Long Field Academy is a smaller than average-sized secondary school. The school has been sponsored by the Spencer Academies Trust since April 1 2015.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is slightly below average. This group of pupils is referred to as disadvantaged in this report.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is about average.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Brooksby Melton College, Students International and through various activities provided through the Melton Behaviour Partnership.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- The principal took up post in June 2015 following the sponsorship of the academy by the Spencer Academies Trust in April 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning during 32 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also visited 'house' activities and observed and spoke to pupils during lunchtime and break.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, members of the senior leadership team and curriculum leaders.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from all year groups as well as representatives of the school ambassadors and spoke to pupils during break and lunchtime.
- The views of parents were gathered using the 34 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff from the 19 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, as well as from discussions with staff.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- They also looked at a wide range of documents provided by the school on progress, improvement, self-evaluation and departmental plans and records.
- Inspectors examined examples of pupils' work and school records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

David Bray, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Boy	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hunt	Ofsted Inspector

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