

Inspection of Lons Infant School

Tavistock Avenue, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3SE

Inspection dates:	23 and 24 April 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this inclusive and welcoming school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. The school ensures that pupils can share any worries and concerns they might have. This helps to keep pupils safe.

Behaviour is calm and positive, with pupils following routines and engaging well in lessons. Staff know pupils well and create a supportive environment, where pupils feel valued and encouraged to succeed. The school values of cooperation, kindness, respect, honesty, determination and responsibility weave through school life. The school provides many opportunities to grow the resilience and tenacity of its pupils and prepare them for their next stages.

Staff have high expectations of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these high expectations and try hard with their learning. They achieve well.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences that enrich the curriculum and help to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Exciting trips and visits take place through 'super starts' or 'fabulous finishes', as a way for pupils to start or finish a topic.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has made many positive changes to strengthen its curriculum to ensure that it is broad, ambitious and meets the needs of pupils in mixed-aged group classes. The curriculum is organised well, so that pupils learn content in a logical order, gradually building their knowledge over time. Staff present new information clearly to pupils. This helps pupils with their learning. For example, in science, pupils talk confidently about different habitats and animals suited to living in them. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to organise their ideas and write their own explanations of what they have studied. This means that they are not deepening their knowledge and skills as well as they could.

In mathematics, the curriculum is well constructed. Pupils enjoy mathematics and engage well in lessons. However, some pupils have misconceptions which are not quickly identified. Teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding effectively to identify gaps in learning.

The school has a strong reading culture. The consistent approach to teaching phonics begins as soon as children start in the Reception Year. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently and accurately. They carefully choose books to match the sounds that pupils know and need to practise. For pupils who struggle to read with fluency, precise support is put in place to help them catch up with their peers. As pupils progress through the school, a love of reading is nurtured through engaging class texts and activities that promote reading for pleasure. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the books they enjoy. They read regularly and widely.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start. The learning environment is engaging. Activities sustain children's concentration successfully. Staff place a high priority on the development of language. They model how to use specific vocabulary and encourage interactive discussions, stretching children's thinking and building their confidence. Children, including those with SEND, develop high levels of independence. This is because activities are well designed. Children become immersed in the range of books staff provide. For example, in their study of minibests, children gain an impressive amount of knowledge about the classification of minibests and their various habitats.

The school identifies pupils with SEND quickly. Leaders work closely with external organisations and staff make appropriate adaptations to learning activities. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

Personal development is strong. Pupils benefit from a clearly structured personal, social, health and economic curriculum, which ensures that they get the right information at the right time. This includes how to keep safe online. Pupils are taught about society and develop a good understanding of democracy and equality. Citizenship is effectively developed through fundraising and community events.

Adults model the conduct, language and learning behaviours they want pupils to learn. Pupils know and follow the school's rules well. They know the classroom routines. For example, during transition times in lessons, children in Reception move swiftly and orderly from the carpet to group tables.

Leaders at all levels, including governors, have a secure understanding of the school and the areas for improvement. They manage development priorities well to reduce the impact on staff workload and well-being. Leaders monitor developments carefully. Governors hold staff to account effectively. Staff value working at the school. They appreciate the support that the school provides.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not routinely ensuring activities in lessons are designed to deepen pupils' understanding and apply learning. As a result, pupils are not developing and retaining a depth of understanding. The school should ensure that staff have the necessary skills and expertise to design activities that enable pupils to remember more of what they have been taught.
- Sometimes, teachers do not check what pupils know and understand carefully enough before introducing new learning. When this is the case, gaps and misconceptions are not addressed effectively. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school should ensure that teachers assess pupils' knowledge consistently well, to enable them to make informed decisions about what to teach next.

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	112710
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10379528
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Moss
Headteacher	Annette Guthrie
Website	www.lons.derbyshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has undergone significant change in leadership since the last inspection. A new headteacher has been appointed and there have been new appointments to the governing body.
- The class structure has been changed to mixed year groups.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector held separate meetings with representatives of the school's governing body and with the local authority's school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders and leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: reviewed the single central record; sampled recruitment files; took account of the views of leaders. Inspectors took account of the views of 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.

Inspection team

Liz Moore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Emma Tayler

Ofsted Inspector

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