

Inspection of Lawnside Academy

Lawnside, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 0LX

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Lawnside Academy enjoy coming to school. They talk positively about their learning. They are proud of their school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported and fully included in the life of the school. The curriculum is carefully planned and adapted to meet their needs.

Pupils behave well. This is because they know and understand what staff expect of them. Pupils are happy and safe. Pastoral care for pupils is a high priority. This is a school which is 'learning together, growing together'. Pupils are well prepared for their next stages of education. This is because the curriculum is well considered, rich and varied. Bullying is rare. When there is a problem, pupils say that staff are there to help them.

There are a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' perseverance, self-esteem and aspiration. Pupils find out how to learn from their mistakes and challenge themselves. This starts in the early years where routines and expectations are well established and continues as children progress through the school.

Pupils are sensitive to world events, for example the war in Ukraine and environmental issues. They are global citizens and talk about rights and responsibilities.

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

The school curriculum is ambitious. The content of the curriculum has been carefully planned. Pupils learn important knowledge in a logical order. This leads to most pupils, including those pupils with SEND, achieving well. Staff have access to high-quality, subject-specific training and ongoing support and development. This means that in most subjects, staff teach the content of the curriculum well. Teachers understand how to check for any misconceptions in pupils' learning. They know how to address any barriers to help pupils build their understanding.

In some subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge pupils need to know and remember. This means that teachers do not understand how to support pupils to learn new content in these subjects, and there are gaps in children's knowledge. In these instances, pupils do not build their understanding on what they have learned previously.

Leaders have implemented a systematic early reading programme. Ongoing high-quality training and support ensure staff follow leaders' chosen approaches to teaching reading. Weekly training and support sessions take place to agree best practice and ensure consistency. Most pupils use the sounds they know to read books with confidence and accuracy. Staff identify effectively gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Leaders carefully coordinate support and interventions. This ensures pupils who find it difficult to read catch up quickly.

Pupils enjoy story time and adults sharing books with them. For example, in a Reception class, children shared a book about growing. They made direct comparisons with a similar book they read the day before that built their interest. Older pupils enjoy reading and participating in reading quizzes. They have a broad reading diet. Pupils develop a love of reading.

Staff in the early years have developed a rich and stimulating curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about what children need to know and how to prepare them for key stage 1. Children are well supported to develop their vocabulary in different subjects. For example, children at snack time discussed the importance of drinking water and being hydrated. Children work well independently and with each other. They demonstrate sensitivity and care towards their peers. Staff plan meaningful opportunities for children to apply their learning in all aspects of the provision.

High levels of supervision and a range of activities enrich lunchtimes. In lessons, most pupils quickly settle and focus on tasks set without prompting. Children are polite and friendly. They say that behaviour has improved in recent years. Suspensions are reducing. This is because leaders develop individual plans for pupils and provide high-quality support. Despite clear attendance policies, too many children have gaps in their knowledge because of absence.

Pupils participate in a range of trips and visits that provide long-lasting memories and support the curriculum. Pupils know about and understand the school values of readiness, respect and resilience. Pupils are reflective and thoughtful. They value their differences and what makes them unique and special. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum is well thought out in terms of what pupils learn. Staff support children to talk and learn about their feelings and how to manage these appropriately.

Governors provide effective support and challenge. They know the school well. Staff value the high-quality training and support provided by leaders and the trust. There is a shared purpose. Staff appreciate the caring, inclusive culture of the school which extends to them as well as pupils and families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe at Lawnside Academy. Staff are aware of possible risks to pupils' welfare and safety. They know pupils well. All staff know and understand their roles regarding keeping pupils safe. They have appropriate and regular training to ensure they are able to give pupils the support and care they need. Staff communicate any small concerns they have about pupils' safety to leaders. Leaders act promptly and work closely with families and other agencies when necessary. Staff are sensitive to the emotional needs of children. Leaders make daily checks to ensure that children are well supported and ready to learn.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that children need to learn. This means that teachers' planned activities do not always help pupils build their knowledge progressively. Leaders need to ensure that in all subjects the content and sequence of knowledge is precise so that children deepen their knowledge across all areas of the curriculum.
- Some children have gaps in their knowledge because of their poor attendance at school. Leaders need to continue to work with parents to implement attendance policies so that attendance continues to improve and children access the full curriculum offer.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145427
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10268246
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ilona Bond
Principal	Cheryl Johnson
Website	www.lawnsideacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) in January 2019.
- The school is growing to accommodate pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND and teaching and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design and geography. Inspectors also met with subject leaders for science, modern foreign languages and PSHE and looked at a range of curriculum

documentation.

- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body and trustees, including the chief executive officer of the academy trust.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, records of governance and documentation relating to attendance and pupil behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and the staff survey. The inspectors spoke informally with parents.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with groups of pupils, including the school council, and took account of their views of the school.

Inspection team

Oriana Dalton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Wilson

His Majesty's Inspector

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