

# Lancot School

Lancot Drive, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 2AP

## Inspection dates

17–18 July 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, managers and governors have successfully transformed this previously underperforming school when it opened into one which is now effective, particularly over the last 12 months. This is a school that continues to improve.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and pupils who are disadvantaged.
- The school's most able pupils do not all make the progress of which they are capable.
- Most teaching and assessment is typically of good quality, although there remains some inconsistency within Years 3 and 4. Pupils respect their teachers and have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school and feel safe. They are well mannered and relish the many opportunities they are offered to develop their leadership skills.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average, although disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities attend school less regularly than their classmates.
- Pupils enjoy reading, but some of the books they select are too easy.
- The school's carefully considered and inclusive curriculum motivates pupils to want to achieve, and develops their entrepreneurial skills very well.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- The school's specialist resourced provision, the 'Orchard', for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, is effective in ensuring that these pupils achieve well and develop their confidence.
- The early years provision is good. Children are well looked after and make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception Years.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements.
- The Challenger Multi-Academy Trust (CMAT) has provided suitable support and challenge to help the school achieve its good overall effectiveness.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - making sure that all teaching targeted at pupils in Years 3 and 4 is of the same high quality as that experienced by other pupils in the school
  - ensuring that teachers' planning across the school takes more account of the needs of the most able pupils
  - guiding pupils to select reading books that are suitably challenging.
- Ensure that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities attend school more regularly by targeting those parents and carers who send their children to school less regularly through the work of the welfare officer.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Senior leaders have successfully addressed the school's weakest aspects, particularly over the course of this academic year, in order to create a school in which pupils achieve well.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by leaders at all levels, governors, parents and pupils. The school's values are known and understood, and are modelled well by pupils across the school.
- Parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are supportive of the school and acknowledge the transformation that has taken place since it opened. One parent of a child in Year 6 wrote: 'As a parent, in all honesty, I could not ask for more of my son's time at Lancot. I'm very sad his time there is coming to an end.'
- Self-evaluation systems are well established and tie in closely with strategic school improvement planning. Inspectors gathered sufficiently convincing evidence during this inspection to support leaders' judgements on the school's effectiveness.
- Middle leaders have played a key role in securing school improvement. These members of staff are knowledgeable and share senior leaders' commitment to making the school as effective as possible. They are willingly held to account for the performance of their individual areas of responsibility, and are developing well as a cohesive team.
- The curriculum is a strong aspect of the school's provision. The headteacher spoke passionately about her rationale for the chosen choice of subjects and approach. She clearly understands what she wants pupils to gain from the curriculum and provided several detailed examples of its impact on developing the whole pupil.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' entrepreneurial skills particularly well. All classes run a bank in order to develop pupils' financial awareness. Whenever a project takes place, such as a school production, pupils devise ways of raising funds and investing them back into the next initiative.
- The management of teaching is effective. Senior leaders have taken decisive action to tackle weak teaching. As a result of more rigorous monitoring activities, weaker teaching has been identified and appropriate support has been offered. Most of this has been effective, but further support is required for the few teachers whose teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Leaders who observed teaching jointly with inspectors accurately evaluated the weaker aspects as well as the stronger features.
- Newly qualified teachers and experienced teachers who join the school are highly complimentary about the induction of new staff. Training is often bespoke, depending on teachers' identified needs. Teachers also value the 'triad' discussions which involve the sharing of good practice in groups of three, often across different key stages.
- The school's expenditure of pupil premium funding and additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is securing good progress for eligible pupils.
- The school has used the physical education (PE) and sport premium well. Some of the fund has been spent on professional development for staff to develop their confidence

and skills, and some has been used to employ sports coaches. There has been an increase in the number of pupils joining sports clubs. Netball is particularly popular with boys and girls, with a third of Years 4, 5 and 6 regularly practising the sport.

- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is highly effective. School leaders carefully map the full coverage of SMSC development and the coverage of fundamental British values. Pupils know right from wrong and have a sound understanding of modern democratic Britain.
- The support of CMAT has contributed to the school's rapid improvement. This has included working with the school's leaders to present achievement data in a more user-friendly way and making it a more helpful tool for raising standards, and providing effective coaching for the headteacher.

### **Governance of the school**

- CMAT's decision to replace the governing body with new members has improved this aspect of the school's leadership. Governors have carried out an audit of their existing skills, and are seeking to appoint someone with experience of diversity as a result of this.
- Governors are determined to drill down more deeply when presented with data to enable them to check more closely the performance of some of the school's more vulnerable groups of pupils.
- Members of the governing body visit the school regularly to test out for themselves what they are told by the school's leaders. This involves visiting lessons, having previously been coached in what to look for, and meeting with key members of staff.
- Governors ensure that statutory policies are reviewed and kept up to date. They also ensure that they receive the relevant training in order to fulfil their role effectively.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have read and received relevant safeguarding documentation, including the safeguarding policy and 'Keeping children safe in education' (2016). All staff have been suitably trained in the government's 'Prevent' duty.
- The school has published a suitable safeguarding policy on its website.
- Procedures relating to child protection matters are understood and implemented well by members of staff. Records relating to child protection matters are securely filed away, with details of discussions with external agencies, actions taken and any resolution reached.
- The school is moving towards an online system, which is currently being piloted by the safeguarding team. Plans are in place to roll this out to all staff from September 2018.
- The school's single central record of recruitment checks of the suitability of staff is compliant with current requirements.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers typically have strong subject knowledge and have productive relationships with the pupils they teach. This helps pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects because teacher–pupil relationships are founded on mutual respect.
- Most teaching takes account of the individual needs of pupils. When teachers plan for learning, they largely use their knowledge of pupils’ prior attainment, which enables most pupils to make good progress. This is particularly the case for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Some teaching does not consistently meet the needs of the most able pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils. This is the case across the school. When this occurs, this lack of precision in teachers’ planning means that most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Hence, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Additional adults in the classroom are used well and routinely liaise closely with the class teacher prior to the lesson taking place. This means that these adults can plan ahead as to how best to support the pupils they work with. Inspectors observed many examples of teaching assistants helping pupils to understand for themselves the tasks they were attempting.
- Pupils are actively involved in a wide range of activities to enable them and their teachers to assess the progress they are making. Pupils typically assess their own progress towards achieving the learning outcomes in the lesson and also the progress made by their classmates. Teachers effectively implement the school’s assessment policy, and pupils told inspectors that they find their teachers’ written and verbal feedback very helpful.
- Effective teaching picks up on pupils’ misconceptions so that they deepen their knowledge and understanding of the topic they are being taught. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on rationing and how this affected meal choices during the Second World War, the teacher quickly and helpfully corrected a pupil’s incorrect response, so that pupils did not leave the lesson with inaccurate information.
- Although the quality of teaching in the school is largely good, there is some inconsistency within certain year groups, notably in Years 3 and 4. This is recognised by senior leaders, who are working well to diminish any differences through well-targeted and bespoke support.
- Reading has an increased profile following the poor results in key stage 2 in 2017. Pupils enjoy reading and can explain the benefits of reading regularly and for pleasure. The teaching of reading has improved across the school, although inspectors found that some of the books being read by pupils for pleasure were not challenging enough when taking account of the pupil’s ability. Pupils spoke excitedly about how every pupil from Reception Year to Year 6 had produced an online digital book which has been published and is available in the local library.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils in the 'Orchard' provision are well looked after, and teachers' expectations of their attitudes to learning and the progress they make match those of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils are actively encouraged to be kind to one another. A group of pupils from key stage 1 told inspectors: 'Everyone is nice. We all look after each other.'
- Pupils understand and model the school's values of 'Nurture; working together; success; and aspire'. They provided meaningful definitions of the four values to inspectors, and enthusiastically collect stickers to demonstrate when they work towards demonstrating the values.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of the risks associated with using computers and social media. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe the school is a safe place for their child.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and the different forms it may take. Although bullying does happen in the school, pupils say that it is an unusual occurrence and are confident that when it is reported to an adult, it is dealt with well. The school council has plans in place to eradicate bullying altogether, by making sure that there is a zero-tolerance approach to any incidents.
- Pupils are routinely taught not to use derogatory language under any circumstances. Recorded incidents of such language are extremely rare.
- Pupils are offered a wide range of roles and responsibilities to develop their confidence and self-esteem. These include being a librarian, a mathematics leader, a PE leader, a digital leader, a reading buddy, a member of the gardening team or a member of the school council. Many of these roles include submitting a written application and being interviewed by a selection panel.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well mannered and respectful of their teachers and of one another. They quickly respond to their teachers' instructions in lessons.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly and are considerate of their classmates' views in lessons. They hold doors open for one another and for visitors to the school. Inspectors observed pupils behaving sensibly during breaktimes and lunchtimes, and socialising well with each other when sitting together for lunch.
- The proportion of pupils excluded from school for fixed periods of time is low.
- Pupils' attendance over time has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged attend school less regularly than others in the school.

- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has declined over time. Previously, it was much too high, but is now getting closer to the national average. This is partly due to the appointment of specialist members of staff, including a welfare officer, and the school's productive work with targeted parents.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and in the way they present the work in their books.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Historically, pupils' outcomes have not been strong by the time they leave the school. This was reflected in the end of key stage 2 results in 2017, where pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable, particularly in reading.
- Stronger leadership and accountability, coupled with marked improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning, ensure that current pupils make good progress over time from their different starting points.
- Unconfirmed key stage 1 test results for 2018 show that progress from early years to the end of key stage 1 is strong, with many pupils achieving beyond age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2018 was well above the national average set in the previous year. A contributory factor to this ever-increasing proportion is the introduction of twice-daily phonics sessions.
- Pupils are now achieving well by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics, although not enough of the school's most-able pupils make the progress of which they are fully capable. This is also evident from the unconfirmed 2018 test results.
- Pupils have access to reading either in lessons or by using the school's library. When inspectors heard pupils read aloud, the quality of reading was typically sound. Some pupils read from books which were age-appropriate, but others did not.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work from all year groups, and across a wide range of subjects, indicates that the improved rate of progress is commonplace. This work review also confirmed some slight inconsistency in the quality of teaching within Years 3 and 4, and the potential for some of the most able pupils to be presented with a greater degree of challenge in lessons.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who have an education, health and care plan, make good progress from their starting points. Pupils in the 'Orchard' provision make gains in their learning and progress.
- Children looked after typically make strong progress in the school and achieve good outcomes.
- The differences in progress between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are diminishing at a fast rate. This is because the additional funding is used well to raise these pupils' aspirations and to develop their confidence.
- Pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary school by the time they reach the end of Year 6. They leave school well equipped with the necessary skills to continue to build on their current progress.



## Early years provision

Good

- The majority of children start in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. However, staff recognise the limited speaking and listening skills of some children when they join the school. Consequently, there is an emphasis on encouraging children to speak clearly and develop their vocabulary. Teachers and teaching assistants ask insightful questions and give children time to reply. Staff model the use of language well. As a result, children quickly learn to speak in whole sentences and express their feelings and ideas with confidence.
- Children currently in the Nursery and Reception classes make strong progress. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved and is now above the national average. Consequently, children are being well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years provision is well led and managed by the knowledgeable early years leader, who is also the deputy headteacher. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes work together well. They have a good understanding of the early years curriculum. They plan activities that engage children and motivate them to learn. Children's knowledge and skills are assessed regularly, and activities are then provided that capture children's interests and build on what they already know.
- Children enjoy the activities teachers plan for them and behave well. Classroom routines are well established and children learn and play happily alongside, and with, each other. They take turns and share equipment well.
- Teachers ensure that children have opportunities to engage in both activities led by adults and tasks that they can choose for themselves. Indoors and outside, the learning areas are welcoming and stimulating. The well-organised resources are accessible so that children can investigate and explore their own ideas. Whether labelling the features of a dinosaur island, building the tallest marble tower or writing about what they would like to be when they grow up, children make good use of the skills they have learned.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use observations to assess precisely how well children are learning and developing. They quickly recognise when children need additional support and put this in place. This ensures that children make good progress from their starting points.
- Adults ensure that children are safe and that safeguarding arrangements are secure. The children know how to stay safe in the environment and take reasonable steps to manage their own well-being and health. For example, an inspector observed that when a group of children were planning an imaginary trip to the beach, they commented: 'We must take our sunhats and some sun cream!'
- Parents feel included in their children's learning through the regular updates they receive, the practical workshops and the special events when they have the opportunity to visit the school and observe their children's learning. Teachers welcome the comments from parents about children's achievements outside of school, and consequently the partnership between home and school is strong and children's development and progress is a shared priority.



## School details

Unique reference number	142036
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10046627

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Emma Reade
Headteacher	Claire Probert
Telephone number	01582 667956
Website	<a href="http://www.lancotschool.co.uk">www.lancotschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@lancotschool.co.uk">office@lancotschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2015. This is the school's first inspection. When the predecessor school, Lancot School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to have serious weaknesses.
- The school is sponsored by the Challenger Multi-Academy Trust. A local governing body oversees the school and is responsible to a board of trustees.
- Lancot School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school hosts a specialist resourced provision called the 'Orchard'. It caters for up to eight pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not have any provision for two-year-olds.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- A below-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils attend the school.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in every class. Inspectors looked at pupils' books across a wide range of subjects and all year groups. Work scrutinised represented different groups of pupils in the school, including disadvantaged pupils, most-able disadvantaged pupils, higher-attaining pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Meetings were held with the chief executive officer of the trust, the CMAT director of education, the head of standards, the headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders and two groups of pupils. The lead inspector also met the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised school improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' progress, records of the quality of teaching and information on pupils' behaviour and attendance. The single central record of recruitment checks of staff was also scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered 124 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 38 responses to the staff questionnaire. Ofsted also took account of one email received from a parent. There were 51 responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

John Daniell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Al Mistrano	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fiona Webb	Her Majesty's Inspector

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