



# Long Sutton Church of England (VC) Primary School

Hyde Road, Long Sutton, Hook, Hampshire RG29 1ST

Tel: 01256 862238 | Fax: 01256 862136

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6<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to share with you our Ofsted report, following our inspection on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023. I encourage you to read this covering letter alongside the report, as the report itself is only a summary of the inspection findings. In this letter I have endeavoured to outline the purpose and context of the inspection, the inspection processes and the extensive feedback which was received on the day of inspection, which was overwhelmingly positive with some helpful areas for improvement. It has been difficult to keep the outcome confidential, so I am thrilled to finally be able to share that **the inspectors judged that our school continues to be a good school.**

## Inspection framework and outcome

Our inspection was a Section 8 inspection of a 'Good' school. These inspections are also known as 'ungraded' inspections because the 'good' grading cannot be changed without converting to a Section 5 (graded) inspection. During a Section 8 inspection, the inspectors still evaluate the school against the full Ofsted framework, in order to assess whether the school remains good. If the inspection were to indicate that the school was no longer good, a full section 5 inspection would take place.

We welcomed two inspectors into school for the day on 20<sup>th</sup> September. They carried out a wide variety of activities (details in inspection report) and made judgements against all areas of the inspection framework:

- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes (including safeguarding)
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management
- Early Years Foundation Stage

## Additional Feedback

Ofsted reports are a summary of the inspection visit and inspectors are required to follow a set template and word count. Our two inspectors shared many more positive comments with us as part of the ongoing verbal feedback on the day and we wanted to share some of these with our wider school community. One key comment that we were particularly proud of was:

*“The core values ooze through the school.”*



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Our school values are absolutely integral to everything we do at Long Sutton, so to hear an inspector give this feedback was wonderful. In addition, the inspectors provided detailed feedback about a variety of subjects and aspects of school life:

## **Maths:**

- Maths is well led and taught, with ambition for children as mathematicians, a strong link between mathematical task design and assessment, and opportunities for children to recall their prior knowledge.
- The planning sequence for maths across the school is clear and well-documented, with evidence of the curriculum building through sequentially to clear end points.
- Classes often teach the same mathematical concepts at the same time and this is helpful for staff as they can discuss sequencing and approaches together.
- Leaders are clear about where maths is going next as part of school improvement planning.

## **Early Reading:**

- The planning, delivery and assessment of phonics is effective, as a result of good continuous professional development for staff.
- Pupil outcomes are good and pupil engagement is positive.
- The teaching sequence is very loyal to the chosen scheme: inspectors were keen to communicate that a scheme has to be 'done well' in order to be effective, and it is!

## **Other Subjects:**

- The intent (aims) of Foundation Subjects are clear and well set out.
- Intended learning is well-sequenced across the school from EYFS to Year 6.
- The school's 3 year plan for focussed development of the foundation subjects is very sensible and effective for a small school.
- There is no curriculum narrowing and all children experience a broad and balanced curriculum.

## **Behaviour & Attitudes**

- The atmosphere in the school is calm, polite and respectful.
- Children's attitudes to learning are strong.
- Most children say that behaviour in the school is good.
- Parents report that this is a friendly school with no bullying.
- Inspectors saw consistent application of the school's behaviour policy, with children well supported with effective strategies when they were struggling with their behaviour.
- The good behaviour and consistent staff approaches clearly come from a place of good staff training and continuous professional development, with a clear understanding from staff that all behaviour is a form of communication.



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- When there was any low level disruption in lessons, it was dealt with well and appropriately by staff; when children were disrupting by 'calling out,' they were usually calling out the answer to a question!

### **Safeguarding**

- The Single Central Register of staff recruitment and induction checks (including volunteers) meets statutory requirements.
- Governors understand and carry out their statutory duties and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding.
- Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and demonstrate confidence and a good understanding of their training.
- There is a shared commitment to protecting children from harm at this school.
- Staff are aware of and responsive to local safeguarding issues and to any safeguarding trends within school.
- Leaders ensure that staff and Governor training is regular and carefully thought through.
- Parents say that their children are safe at this school.

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities):**

- Staff have a clear understanding of how to support children with SEND and of the school's approach.
- There are high expectations for children with SEND to demonstrate what they know and to access the curriculum.

### **Personal Development:**

- There are lots of opportunities for children to take on responsibilities and pupils appreciate these opportunities.
- The PSHE (Personal, Social, Health & Economic) curriculum is well supplemented with additional content, resulting in thorough coverage.
- The curriculum is resourced carefully to consciously address stereotyping.
- There is a real sense that staff take great care over the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children at the school.

### **What did parents say?**

Inspectors spoke with some parents at drop-off time and also analysed the online parent survey. Survey results can be viewed on [Ofsted's parent View website](#).

- There was a high response to the parent survey: 61 responses for a small school is a very good response rate.
- Inspectors reported that of the 61 parent comments, only two were in any way negative – this is very unusual!



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- Parents reported that the school is welcoming and caring, that staff are warm and approachable and always go the extra mile.
  - Parents of the Reception 2023 cohort were very positive about transition to school and how effective the introduction to school has been.
  - 97% of parents would recommend the school to other parents – inspectors noted that they do not see higher than this in their inspections and it is particularly pleasing to see in a small school, where each parent's view is worth a greater percentage!
  - Inspectors identified a real sense amongst parents that children are happy to go to school here, that their children get a good deal here and do well.

## What did staff say?

Inspectors spoke with several staff during the inspection and staff shared their views using the online Ofsted survey and responses were highly positive. Staff reported that:

- School leaders engage well with them as a staff team, over issues such as workload, and staff feel they can approach leaders about any issues.
- All staff strongly agree that leaders are respected and they are proud to work at the school.

## What are our next steps and areas for development?

The very nature of inspection means that areas for improvement will always be identified. The Ofsted inspection framework is extremely thorough, with a particular focus on curriculum. It is taking time for schools to fully implement new expectations around curriculum sequencing and progression in the Foundation Subjects (all subjects except maths and English), and so most 'Good' schools receive action points linked to further curriculum development. I think it is also important to note that every school, from the smallest primary to the largest secondary, is judged against the same framework and the same expectations. Our inspectors, whilst bound by the framework, acknowledged that as a small school it will take us longer to develop our curriculum in line with the requirements of the framework, and so we should be extra proud of our inspection outcome and how far we have already come with our curriculum work.

Our inspectors reported that the curriculum picture at our school is very positive overall. Our improvement areas are 'even better if' actions; refinements which will give us helpful guidance on how to further develop our curriculum planning in relation to our foundation subjects.

**Area for improvement 1:** *'There are variations in the quality of staff's subject knowledge in some areas of the curriculum. This impacts on how well pupils learn in some subjects. The school should ensure that staff have sufficiently secure subject knowledge in the curriculum areas where it is not strong enough, so that pupils can learn equally well across their full range of subjects.'*



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In this educational context, 'subject knowledge' has enormous meaning. It does not simply refer to staff knowing the subject specific content which they are teaching, it relates to how effectively staff know the small steps which children need to progress through, so that within a lesson they can intervene even more effectively 'in the moment' to help children make the very best progress.

**Area for improvement 2:** *'In a small minority of subjects, there are times when the knowledge that pupils need to learn is not sequenced in sufficient detail. As a result, pupils do not gain the knowledge that they should across the whole curriculum in a logical order. The school should ensure that the knowledge pupils need to learn in all of their subjects is sequenced precisely, so that pupils can build their long-term knowledge successfully.'*

This refers to further refinements which could be made within our planned units of work, so that the planned learning journeys are sequenced as logically and clearly as possible.

## Final Thoughts

Our 'Good' Ofsted report is a reflection of many terms of ongoing, effective strategic planning and implementation of these plans, underpinned by the collective drive of the whole staff team to meet the needs of our children and give them the very best experiences as they journey through our school. The Governors have also done excellent work in holding the school to account for this work. Thank you and congratulations to the whole team on securing such a positive inspection report. I know you will all feel just as proud as I do of this great outcome.

Mrs. Hannah Inglis  
Headteacher