

Inspection of Linchfield Academy

Crowson Way, Deeping St James, Peterborough, Lincolnshire PE6 8EY

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 July 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?

The ambitious, caring ethos of Linchfield Academy is built on the values of respect, reflection, resourcefulness, responsibility and resilience. The '5Rs' are the heart of the school. They guide leaders' decisions. They form the language of learning at Linchfield, with teachers referring to the '5Rs' frequently throughout their lessons. Pupils aspire to show these qualities. They know what they mean, and they understand why they are important.

Pupils feel valued and secure in this nurturing environment. A pupil summed up the views of others well when they said, 'We are appreciated and listened to here, which makes us feel safe.'

Pupils are polite and courteous. They enjoy learning, and they like being at school. Pupils are eager to join in during lessons. They take pride in their work. Pupils enjoy being rewarded for their good behaviour and demonstrating the '5Rs'. They look forward to saving up their 'dojo points' and spending them in the school shop.

Pupils contribute to the development of the school. Leaders take pupils' ideas on board. School councillors, for instance, are proud of the quiet area they set up on the playground.

Parents recognise the improvements that have taken place at Linchfield in recent years.

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

Leaders have created a real buzz around reading. They have ensured that story time is an important and special part of the day. Pupils listen with bated breath as their teachers read to them. Leaders work with pupils to promote a love of reading. Reading ambassadors, for example, take care of the library, read to younger children, and organise reading challenges for others to enjoy. Staff teach phonics well. They encourage fluent reading by asking pupils to sound out in their heads if they can. Staff make sure that pupils in the early stages of reading read from books that are matched to the letter sounds they know. This is to develop pupils' confidence and fluency when they read at home.

Leaders have developed a strong curriculum. Plans set out exactly what pupils must learn and when they must learn it. Leaders ensure that teachers link current learning to past learning. This approach helps pupils to retain knowledge and make connections.

The leader with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) makes sure that pupils receive support that is precisely matched to their individual needs. Teachers adapt lessons well so that pupils with SEND follow the same ambitious curriculum as everyone else.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They deliver the curriculum well most of the time. However, teachers do not always check closely enough on pupils' understanding in lessons. This means that pupils are sometimes given work before they are ready for it. Teachers typically demonstrate what they want pupils to learn. Showing pupils exactly what to do and how to do it helps them to apply their knowledge and refine their skills. However, when teachers do not model learning as precisely, some pupils make slower progress.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. Leaders ensure that there is the right balance between delivering the planned curriculum and running with children's interests. Staff make the most of children's imaginary play. They look for opportunities to extend children's ideas and develop their language. For example, staff skilfully supported a group of children to form a band and put on their own rock concert. In addition to choosing their setlist and rehearsing their songs, adults also encouraged children to use their literacy and numeracy skills to make and sell tickets for the show.

Leaders monitor attendance closely. They intervene early when pupils have too much time off school. This proactive approach keeps absences low.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the values and attitudes they need to be successful learners and well-rounded members of society. As a result, pupils hold welcoming and inclusive views towards difference and diversity. They understand the importance of equality. There are several leadership roles for pupils to take on, as well as a range of clubs for them to enjoy. Those who attend gardening club get to grow and sell vegetables, with some of the fresh produce used in school lunches.

Subject leaders are knowledgeable and passionate. They regularly check how well the curriculum is being taught and learned. Leaders ensure that staff have the time they need to carry out leadership roles. Trust leaders and governors support and challenge school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive effective safeguarding training. Leaders frequently check to make sure that staff have the knowledge they need to keep pupils safe. Staff look out for the potential signs of abuse and neglect. They report their concerns promptly. Leaders are persistent in gaining the support that pupils and their families need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They know they will get support if they are worried or upset. As one pupil, typical of many, commented, 'All the adults here are trusted adults – it means we can tell them things and they will help us.'

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always check closely enough during lessons on what pupils understand. This means that pupils are sometimes given tasks before they are ready. Teachers must sharpen their use of assessment in lessons, ensuring they pick up on any misconceptions and fill important gaps in pupils' knowledge before new content is introduced.
- When teachers demonstrate how to use knowledge and apply skills, pupils achieve well. However, when learning is not modelled as effectively, pupils make less progress. The quality of pupils' work is not as high when they do not have an example to follow. Teachers should ensure that pupils always have a clear understanding of what they need to do and how they need to do it so that all pupils achieve well in all lessons.

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	147677
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10267759
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Hopkins
Headteacher	Katie Brockington
Website	www.linchfield-cit.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Linchfield Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2020 as part of Community Inclusive Trust. When its predecessor school, Linchfield Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club managed by the school.

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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, design and technology, and computing. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the

curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum plans and pupils' work for science and physical education. They visited lessons in these subjects too.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, subject leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, the early years, behaviour, and personal development.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leaders for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors from the local school board, including the chair of the local school board. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the trust board, as well as executive leaders from Community Inclusive Trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Martyn Skinner	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector

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