

Inspection of Lodge Farm Primary School

Mobbsbury Way, Chells, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 0HP

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils proudly share what makes them happy at school, speaking confidently about the school's values and behaviour. Strong relationships with staff provide pupils with reassurance and support. Pupils learn about which trusted adults they can turn to whenever they need someone to talk to.

Most staff have high expectations for what pupils should achieve, but this is not consistent across the school. The quality of pupils' learning varies too much across the school. This limits their progress through the curriculum and they do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils behave well. They enjoy school and attend well. In lessons, most pupils listen attentively to their teachers. Pupils enjoy cooperative play during breaktimes. Children in the early years are familiar with routines. This is evident in how they manage themselves when completing tasks independently. They interact well with their peers, building positive relationships.

Supporting pupils' emotional and mental well-being is a priority for the school. Each classroom has a calm corner, where pupils can take time to relax and reset. They learn effective calming techniques and discuss how these can help them when they are worried or upset. This helps pupils to manage their feelings and emotions.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone many changes in leadership. Governors have supported the school through these challenging times and supported staff well with their workload and well-being. Leadership is now stable. The school has established suitable plans for improvement, but these are in the early days of implementation. Many parents and carers recognise, and appreciate, the commitment of staff to improve the school.

The school's curriculum outlines the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn over time. Staff deliver a broad and engaging curriculum. However, in some subjects, the school has not ensured that teachers fully understand the curriculum content or have strong subject knowledge. This means that some staff do not explain key concepts well to pupils. This prevents pupils from developing a secure understanding of their learning.

In the early years, staff engage children in learning that builds appropriate understanding. For instance, staff create stimulating environments that encourage children's imaginative play and social interaction skills. Children enjoy collaborating with their friends and develop their problem-solving skills. Staff also support children in developing a broad vocabulary and a firm grasp of the foundations of mathematics. This prepares children well for the next stage of their education.

Staff check that pupils have understood what they are learning. In reading and mathematics, this information is used well to make sure that new knowledge develops

from pupils' prior understanding. In these subjects, pupils learn well through the curriculum. However, in many other subjects, teachers do not use their checks on what pupils know and remember to adapt learning or to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge effectively. This means that some pupils find it difficult to grasp new concepts and learn important knowledge.

Staff have gained many skills in using teaching methods promoted by the school. However, not all staff have developed these skills consistently, and some staff are not using these effectively to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils receive differing levels of guidance and support. This means that some pupils learn well while others struggle.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified. This has not always been timely. The school is addressing this and ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of pupils' strengths and where they may need some support. Staff work hard to provide suitable adjustments for pupils who need them. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in the full range of subjects.

Pupils benefit from a highly structured phonics programme. It is taught effectively by skilled staff. Pupils recall sounds with confidence. They practise blending to read frequently. Staff provide targeted support to pupils who need extra help, enabling them to keep up with their peers. Older pupils who are not yet fluent readers continue to receive one-to-one support with reading, which is tailored to their understanding and needs. Pupils read books that match their phonics knowledge. Pupils enjoy reading and learn to read fluently and with confidence.

Pupils demonstrate consistently positive behaviour. This creates a respectful and purposeful learning environment. Clear expectations support pupils in making responsible choices. Pupils interact politely with staff and their peers. The school fosters a culture of kindness and mutual respect. Pupils generally behave with maturity and contribute positively to the school community.

The school provides a well-rounded personal development programme that helps pupils to become more socially aware. Enrichment clubs, charity projects and cultural events give pupils new experiences and teach them to value diversity. With a strong focus on character education and emotional well-being, pupils learn to show compassion for the views of others. As a result, pupils leave the school as well-rounded individuals, ready to contribute positively to society.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In many subjects, teachers do not use assessment well to inform teaching or identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that some pupils may not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers know how to use assessment to inform teaching and to help pupils learn effectively.
- Staff do not teach the subjects in the school's curriculum consistently well. As a result, pupils receive varying approaches to teaching, with some approaches being more effective than others, leading to differences in learning outcomes. This impacts many pupils, but those with SEND are often affected more. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise to ensure consistently effective teaching across all subjects.

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	132091
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345282
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Debra Nash and Emma Hone
Headteacher	Joanna Farbon
Website	www.lodgefarm.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher started at this school on 22 April 2025. The school has not had a substantive headteacher since January 2024.
- 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. 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors. Additionally, inspectors met with a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history 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 inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

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