

Inspection of Longwood School

Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 2QG

Inspection dates: 17 to 19 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils take great pride in attending Longwood School. They express the opinion that they are all friends, which is comforting for them. Staff and pupils have positive and respectful relationships. Pupils trust adults have their best interests at heart, which they do.

The staff have high expectations for pupils' achievements. They also ensure that pupils behave appropriately. Pupils listen courteously during lessons. This enables them to work in a calm environment. Pupils display good manners. They ask about others' well-being and hold doors open. This shows they have developed mature social skills.

Pupils show commitment to their education. They enjoy working hard. They try their best in all they do. Pupils generally achieve well throughout the curriculum.

Pupils learn to respect others with different beliefs. They talk about this with confidence. They also understand democracy and the laws of this country. Additionally, they understand why these are important. Through discussions and real-world examples, they develop an understanding of how they can make a positive contribution to society.

Access to interesting trips is part of the school's offer. There are also various clubs. Pupils particularly enjoy these. Taking part develops their curriculum knowledge. They also develop their talents and interests.

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

Many changes have taken place since the last inspection. New school leadership has made improvements to the education that pupils receive. The curriculum has been reviewed and improved. Staff follow clear plans and guidance to know what to teach and when. The mixed-age groups are well considered. Some subjects develop over two years. However, other subjects such as mathematics are taught in separate age groups. This helps ensure that pupils learn what they need to. Staff generally have strong subject knowledge. They can explain new concepts clearly to pupils, who complete tasks that consolidate and develop their understanding effectively.

The curriculum implementation in some subjects is still under development. Staff are not able to teach these subjects consistently well because they have not received appropriate support and guidance. This affects pupils' progress through these curriculums, which is not as strong as their progress through more developed subject areas.

In the early years, well-designed spaces, thoughtfully selected resources and skilled staff ensure that children become independent learners. They learn to problem-solve, which helps them develop resilience, a vital skill for becoming strong learners in the future. Children also learn to communicate well and develop their language

ability. These are crucial skills to be successful in reading and writing. Children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1 and beyond.

Pupils love to read. This starts in the pre-school, where children learn to hear and recognise different sounds. This ensures they are ready to learn to read using phonics. Pupils have daily phonics lessons until they are fluent readers. In these lessons, pupils get the practice they need to read unfamiliar words. Teachers accurately check pupils' phonics understanding. They use this information to ensure that pupils who need extra catch-up sessions receive this. These help them to keep up with their peers. Pupils read books that align with their phonics knowledge. This further builds their confidence and fluency.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs identified. This helps staff understand which teaching strategies are appropriate for them to use. Parents and carers and the school work together to understand pupils' strengths. The school also considers ways to help pupils develop if needed. This can include one-to-one targeted teaching and support in lessons. However, the support provided by the school is not as effective as it could be. This is because it does not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. Sometimes, the support provided does not match pupils' needs. This makes it harder for staff to fill any gaps in knowledge or understanding that pupils may have.

Pupils understand the school's rules and behave well. Even the youngest children listen attentively when appropriate. Throughout the school, pupils get along well with one another. They have learned to share and compromise well. They show a great deal of compassion for their peers. This helps strengthen their relationships. It also builds a positive school community.

The school's personal development programme is well considered. It meets pupils' needs. Pupils learn about different religions. They understand that these can shape others' beliefs. They also learn about different types of disabilities and the make-up of families. Sometimes, this learning is through stories, which helps pupils understand more complex ideas in an age-appropriate way.

The proprietor checks that the school is meeting its statutory duties, including compliance with the requirements of the early years foundation stage. The proprietor and chair of the governing body ensure that all the independent school standards are met, including the requirements under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. They also ensure that the right staff complete jobs they are skilled to carry out. Additionally, the leadership team promotes a positive school ethos and a sense of community. Staff believe the school leaders understand their workload and take action to lessen it.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, staff are not fully implementing all the curriculum and teaching approaches as the school intends. This means pupils are not making as much progress through these subjects as possible. The school should continue to support staff in delivering the curriculum as intended so that pupils can learn as best as they can.
- For some pupils, the support provided by staff does not meet their needs well enough. Additionally, targets and guidance about pupils' needs are not specific enough. This leads to some pupils making slower progress because teachers do not address the gaps in their understanding effectively. The school should ensure that its assessment processes accurately identify the needs of pupils and provide them with more closely matched targeted support and guidance.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	117662
DfE registration number	919/6236
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10391712
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Longwood School and Nursery Ltd
Headteacher	Richard Hunter
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,975
Telephone number	019 2325 3715
Website	longwoodschool.co.uk
Email address	info@longwoodschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 to 19 October 2023

Information about this school

- There has been a change of headteacher and proprietor body since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- It has a separately registered and inspected Nursery in the same building.
- The school offers childcare before school, after school and during the school holidays. This is run by school staff and managed by school leaders.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, reviewed evidence of work and spoke with pupils about some other subjects.
- 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.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katie Devenport

His Majesty's Inspector

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