

Inspection of Lakeside Primary Academy

877 London Road, Alvaston, Derby DE24 8UY

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| Inspection dates: | 1 and 2 July 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 |

The principal of this school is Lynn Thorne. This school is part of The Harmony Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Antony Hughes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew McCully.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive a warm welcome at Lakeside Primary Academy. Pupils who join the school, including those who arrive from countries all over the world, soon feel at home in this caring environment. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging. They describe their school as 'a kind place' and somewhere that 'every child can be happy and learn'.

Since the last inspection, behaviour has improved significantly. Pupils understand how important it is to help each other to do their best. They learn and play together well. Pupils listen with care to the ideas and opinions of others. They show empathy and offer encouragement if someone is upset. Staff are positive role models for pupils. They are patient and compassionate. Pupils who need more help to manage their feelings receive well-considered support. Pupils trust the staff in school. They feel safe.

The school has raised its expectations of what pupils can achieve. School leaders have successfully addressed many of the concerns raised at the last inspection. Nevertheless, pupils do not receive an education that is good enough. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should and are not fully prepared for the next stage in their education.

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

The school follows the trust's 'Harmony Model Curriculum'. This curriculum is well organised and sequenced to ensure that pupils' knowledge builds up in a logical order over time. It is intended to excite pupils about their learning. Pupils talk about parts of their learning with interest. They remember key facts from their history and science lessons, for example how Ancient Egyptians worshipped their gods or how water evaporates. The curriculum is underpinned by an 'ASPIRE' ethos. This identifies key learning behaviours that pupils should develop over time, such as effective communication, creativity and problem-solving. The school also prioritises improving pupils' language skills and vocabulary. In the Reception Year, children are reminded to speak in whole sentences. They learn to use precise vocabulary such as 'plant pot' rather than 'bucket' as their teacher reads a story about gardening.

Teachers' delivery of the curriculum is not consistently effective. Where it is strongest, for example in the early years, children learn well because the tasks are clearly linked to the intended learning. In mathematics, teachers routinely check that pupils remember the intended learning. They provide clear explanations and give pupils activities that help them to practise new learning. However, these strengths are not well-established across other subjects or securely applied by enough teachers.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff benefit from advice and support on how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND. On the whole, they do this well. Most pupils access the full curriculum and experience success. However, there is a small number of pupils with SEND who are not in receipt of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The school ensures that pupils come to love books. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of texts and genres. Each class is named after an author, such as Donaldson, Zephaniah and Tolkien. Pupils name classic children's picture books and spooky tales as the books they enjoy. Story times provide a calm and enjoyable end to the school day. The school's approach to the teaching of phonics is well planned out. Children get off to a great start in the Reception Year. They use their knowledge of sounds to read and write simple words. Beyond the early years, phonics lessons are not consistently delivered with sufficient expertise. As a result, pupils do not develop a secure understanding of the phonics code. Too many pupils do not have the skills they need to read fluently and confidently.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Right from the early years, children learn to be a good friend, share equipment and listen well. In the Reception Year, children are reminded to use a 'quiet hand' if they shout out. School routines are firmly established. Across the school, pupils respond well to instructions. Lessons and social times are characterised by pupils' good manners and positive attitudes. The school's work to improve pupils' attendance has been effective. The number of pupils who are absent from school has reduced.

The school provides pupils with a strong personal development offer. The 'Harmony Pledge' is at the heart of this work. During pupils' time at the school, they can be a performer, a volunteer and a fundraiser. They learn the value of being responsible and active citizens. They are keen to take on roles as junior leaders or represent their peers on the school council. Pupils embrace diversity. They know that they should treat everyone with respect regardless of difference.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the school's team spirit and describe themselves as 'Lakesiders'. They appreciate leaders' efforts to consider their workload and well-being. A majority of parents recognise the progress the school has made to improve. However, a number of parents and carers continue to express concerns about the work of the school. These parents do not feel that the school communicates with them as well as they would expect.

The trust has provided leaders with considerable support and appropriate challenge as they have worked to improve the school. While the school has made strides in the right direction, there is more to do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that staff consistently deliver the curriculum effectively across subjects. Not enough pupils achieve well, and as a result, they are not

sufficiently prepared for the next stage in their education. The school should ensure that staff have the skills they need to support pupils to know and remember the intended curriculum.

- A small number of pupils with SEND do not have access to a balanced curriculum. These pupils are not provided with the opportunities they need to develop their knowledge across a wide range of subjects. The school should ensure that a broad curriculum is offered to pupils.
- Not enough staff are sufficiently expert to teach early reading well. Some pupils do not acquire an understanding of the phonics code as quickly as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to deliver the phonics programme effectively.
- A number of parents express their dissatisfaction with the ways in which the school communicates with them. As a result, they are not confident that the school is providing the best possible education for their child. The school should continue to work in partnership with parents to seek their views and address their concerns.

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

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| Unique reference number | 146080 |
| Local authority | Derby |
| Inspection number | 10379593 |
| 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 | 637 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Andrew McCully |
| CEO of the trust | Antony Hughes |
| Principal | Lynn Thorne (executive principal) |
| Website | www.lakeside.theharmonytrust.org |
| Dates of previous inspection | 29 and 30 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Harmony Trust.
- The school operates an additionally resourced unit for pupils with SEND who have complex needs.
- The school organises and manages a breakfast and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not currently make use of 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal, head of academy and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with leaders of the trust including the CEO and director of education. The chair of trustees joined this meeting remotely.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, 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. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum in some other subjects and considered examples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils reading to a member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents at the start of the school day. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Caroline Poole, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Kyna Adkins | Ofsted Inspector |
| Amanda Greaves | Ofsted Inspector |
| Damienne Clarke | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Clive Worrall | Ofsted Inspector |

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