

Inspection of St Luke's Park Primary School

Liberty Way, Runwell, Wickford, Essex SS11 7LH

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jen Kendall-Hobbs. This school is part of The Eveleigh LINK Academy 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), Joseph Figg, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sara Kightley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy because they know staff care about them. They enjoy the healthy, tasty meals at lunchtime and know they can talk to trusted staff when something is on their mind. This helps them to feel safe and supported. Families speak warmly about the school's close-knit community. Special events bring everyone together and are a highlight of school life. Many look forward to the termly walks, where they learn about local history and notice the changing seasons. Singing assembly is another favourite, especially when the school song fills the hall with energy.

Pupils' behaviour is typically friendly and polite. Awards such as 'star of the week' celebrate those pupils who demonstrate the school's values. These include showing courage for doing the right thing or creativity by being imaginative.

The school expects pupils to achieve and aim high. Typically, they rise to this challenge and achieve well across a range of subjects. This is especially true in reading, where pupils develop strong habits through engaging routines such as 'book bingo' and reading challenges. These activities foster a real love of books.

However, children in the early years do not get off to the best start. Over time, they have not benefited from a curriculum that develops their knowledge securely or sparks their curiosity in the same way.

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

As the school has grown, leaders have managed change calmly and thoughtfully. They have used support from the trust and local authority, as well as their own expertise, to improve key areas. Their work is having a positive impact. For example, they chose to create the Rainbow Room to support pupils with complex needs, helping them to thrive.

Changes in staffing in the early years have made it harder for the school to develop the curriculum. Currently, the curriculum does not help children build well on what they already know. Some children are unsure how to take part in activities or follow routines. The school is taking considered steps to improve this. For example, children now have more chances to revisit key phonics learning. However, the curriculum still lacks the clarity needed to guide teaching well. As a result, some children are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they should be.

The school's reading programme is working well. Staff are guided on how to help pupils understand what they read, including how to skim and scan to find the key facts. They quickly spot anyone who struggles with reading. Pupils get the help they need, including extra opportunities to read aloud. Before reading, staff go over letter sounds and 'tricky' words with pupils. This helps pupils feel ready and read with growing accuracy.

The school carefully constructs its curriculum. Leaders draw on trust-wide networks to decide whether to use existing schemes or create their own. In most subjects, pupils

learn key ideas and skills well. However, some find it hard to get their thoughts down on paper. The teaching pupils receive about how to write is not working well enough to address gaps in their foundational knowledge around spelling, punctuation and grammar. While the school has begun to act, this work is at an early stage.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities with care and determination. From thoughtful early transitions to skilled daily support, staff adapt well to include every pupil in lessons. For example, through careful recruitment and ongoing staff training, the school provides various communication methods to help pupils express their ideas, needs and feelings.

Pupils generally behave well and respond positively to the school's values and routines. Regular reinforcement of these helps embed them into daily habits, making pupils feel settled and ready to learn.

Some pupils' attendance has been lower than the school would like in recent years. However, the school's consistent and supportive approach is helping. Individual cases are improving, and overall attendance is now moving in a positive direction.

The school offers a suitable range of opportunities to help grow pupils' confidence and character. Pupils take part in activities like learning British Sign Language, working with an artist and the buddy system where older pupils mentor younger ones. These planned opportunities help pupils to understand others and learn about the world around them.

Trustees and local governors ask thoughtful questions that prompt leaders to reflect and refine their work. They collaborate closely, taking measured action, such as seconding staff from trust schools, to support the school's ongoing growth.

Parents and staff alike value the school's calm, welcoming atmosphere, which stems from leaders listening and responding to their needs. Staff appreciate well-considered curriculum documents that reduce workload and changes that support their well-being, such as limiting communication to within the school day. Parents feel reassured by the school's friendly approach and remark that recent changes have brought greater stability.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the early years, the curriculum is at an early stage of development and lacks sufficient clarity. As a result, staff are not consistently clear about the most important knowledge and vocabulary that children should learn. This affects how well children

build firm foundations for future learning. The school should continue to refine curriculum thinking and support staff to develop shared, effective approaches to teaching that help all children get off to a strong start.

- Some pupils have gaps in their foundational knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. These gaps limit pupils' ability to write with accuracy and clarity. The school should ensure that pupils are supported to build the knowledge and skills they need to develop their writing accuracy and proficiency across the curriculum.

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	149066
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10378593
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sara Kightley
CEO of the trust	Joseph Figg
Headteacher	Jen Kendall-Hobbs
Website	www.stlukesparkprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2022 with a Reception Year and a mixed-age class for Years 1 and 2, in response to local demand for school places. By September 2024, the school had grown to five single-year classes, from the Reception Year to Year 4, with significant growth in Years 3 and 4.
- The school does not 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the CEO, the headteacher, three trustees and two members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions with leaders about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, and held discussions with some pupils about their learning and wider school experience. They also reviewed samples of pupils' work and listened to a selection of pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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 reviewed school documentation, including the school's development plan, minutes of meetings of the trust board and minutes of meetings of the local governing body.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's staff, pupil, and parent surveys, including free-text comments submitted via Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Shadbolt

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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