

John Locke Academy

Bader Way, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 0FW

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Rightly, parents, pupils and staff are extremely proud of their school. Central to the school's success is the highly effective leadership of the principal and vice principal.
- Senior leaders have created a thriving learning environment superbly well, where pupils flourish and are at the heart of everything that happens.
- From the moment they start school, children in the early years are immersed in exciting learning opportunities. Children develop a genuine love of learning and make excellent progress in readiness for the move to Year 1.
- Pupils achieve highly in reading, writing and mathematics. From different starting points, pupils make rapid and sustained progress. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well supported to excel.
- Pupils soak up the many opportunities to write for a purpose. Their writing is impressive across a range of curriculum subjects. However, some of the strategies to improve pupils' spelling are not fully embedded.
- Attendance is above the national average. Pupils love coming to school because teachers make learning irresistible. The excitement for learning is tangible among staff and pupils.
- Governors and representatives from the trust use their skills, knowledge and expertise extremely well to support and challenge school leaders. Together, governors and leaders continually reflect on all aspects of the school's work to ensure that standards are of the highest quality.
- Leaders, including governors and the trust, are clear about the importance of building on the excellent start the school has made as it moves into its next stage of development. They acknowledge the need to support new middle leaders in maintaining the high standards already achieved.
- Leaders work very closely with teachers to plan learning that challenges pupils to think deeply and ask questions. The quality of teaching is consistently high.
- In all classrooms, pupils show extremely high levels of confidence, motivation and self-esteem. Teachers provide an abundance of practical activities that develop pupils' skills in a wide range of subjects. From a young age, pupils have a superb understanding of the importance of perseverance and resilience in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. In lessons and social times, pupils are polite, respectful and show great kindness towards others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As the school expands further, ensure that new middle leaders are well supported to maintain the excellent standards throughout the school so that pupils continue to achieve highly.
- Fully embed the recently introduced strategies to enhance pupils' spelling still further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal has been highly successful in achieving his vision for John Locke Academy. Together with the vice principal, he has established a school where learning is fun and engaging, and where all staff support the school's strong and well-founded ethos. Pupils are thirsty for challenge, show high levels of perseverance and curiosity in their learning and develop an extremely strong determination to succeed.
- Senior leaders have ensured that all pupils make exceptionally strong progress in their learning. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching closely. Highly effective systems are in place to provide teachers with professional development opportunities to sustain the high standards and continually look for ways to make teaching and learning innovative and exciting.
- Leaders, the governing body and representatives from the trust know what is needed to maintain the very high standards as the school roll increases and pupils move into key stage 2. Together, they are extremely determined to maintain the excellence in leadership, the curriculum and the school's ethos, and stand firm to this as they recruit new members of staff to the teaching and leadership teams.
- Middle leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development very well. These members of staff benefit from the bespoke support and training provided by the principal, vice principal and the regional director from the trust. They monitor standards in their year groups effectively and model excellent practice to their colleagues. As the school grows, leaders and governors acknowledge the importance of supporting new middle leaders so that they too uphold the very high standards in teaching and the excellent outcomes for pupils.
- The school's curriculum is crafted carefully with each cohort of pupils in mind. It is all about pupils acquiring not only literacy, numeracy and scientific skills but also a wide variety of life skills that help pupils to approach tasks and challenges with an open mind and resilience. Teachers make sure that all learning has a purpose and that pupils are fully involved in asking questions, finding out answers and presenting their findings. These approaches are used in science, history and geography very effectively. Pupils learn other curriculum subjects through well-thought-out themes. All this enables pupils to make excellent progress in subjects across the curriculum and apply learning skills in a range of contexts.
- High-quality learning does not only take place in classrooms. All aspects of the school's grounds are used superbly well to develop pupils' skills. Pupils are rightly delighted with their allotment, for instance, where they grow radishes, broad beans and a range of plants. They speak passionately about their 'hop-sotch herb garden' and know the importance of looking after the environment. Pupils achieved a national gardening award as a result of their efforts. As one pupil said, 'Our garden is beautiful. It is a truly functional garden.'
- Much emphasis is placed on pupils understanding the purpose of their learning. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to plan, prepare and showcase their work, ideas and achievements. For example, Year 1 pupils showed resilience as they put the finishing touches to their show to parents, and other pupils spoke positively

about how they perfected their African drumming. Pupils are fully involved in how their learning is shared with parents. For instance, they create exhibitions to showcase their learning and work collaboratively to design and make hall displays to celebrate their learning about India.

- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to be active. In the playground and on the field, sports coaches, midday assistants and other staff provide exciting sporting activities for pupils to enjoy at lunchtime. Leaders use the additional primary sports funding wisely to provide pupils with input from skilled sports coaches in physical education lessons. Teachers are fully involved in these sessions and develop their own skills in teaching a range of sports to the pupils.
- Leaders use the additional pupil premium funding efficiently. Disadvantaged pupils make very strong progress in their learning because the vice principal, together with teachers, ensures that any barriers to pupils' learning are clearly understood and addressed. Highly focused meetings to discuss pupils' learning needs ensure that all pupils have whatever it takes to make strong and sustained progress.
- Leaders pay close attention to how the additional funding is used to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders employ additional time from other professionals, such as speech therapists and educational psychologists, to provide individualised support to these pupils.
- All pupils are treated and valued as individuals. The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. All pupils understand the school's values and demonstrate these in their day-to-day learning and conversations with others. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain and understand why respect, democracy and kindness are important.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school. Inspectors received a high number of free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey. Parents' comments praise the excellent leadership, the commitment from teachers to provide outstanding learning opportunities and, most commonly, their children's enjoyment of school and their love and excitement for learning. One parent's comment echoed the views of many: 'I could not be happier. Leaders do an excellent job and all staff display a huge passion for delivering the best experiences for our children.'

Governance of the school

- From the outset, governors have supported school leaders to create a school which serves its growing community exceptionally well. Governors fulfil their statutory duties very effectively and have an astute and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be done as the school roll increases.
- Governors are forward-thinking and bring an impressive range of skills to the school. Their sharply focused visits to the school enable them to hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make. The governing body plans and evaluates its work very effectively using highly organised meetings and a well-thought-out action plan.
- The governing body takes professional development seriously. Together, governors ensure that they all have safeguarding training and are up to date with the latest national guidance and legislation.

- The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust has provided high-quality support for leaders since the school opened. The trust monitors pupils' outcomes closely and, together with governors, holds leaders to account for pupils' achievements. Work with other schools in the trust is a strength and has helped to secure effective training opportunities for leaders and other staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make sure that the school is safe for pupils, particularly as it grows in size. The checks that leaders make on the suitability of staff and all adults who use the premises are robust and meet requirements. Staff training for safeguarding is up to date and in line with the latest guidance.
- Parents say that their children feel safe in school. Pupils agree. Those pupils who spoke with inspectors were very confident that all adults in school would be there for them to discuss any worries or problems. Leaders put pupils' well-being at the heart of their work, and this means that safeguarding procedures are robust, very well understood by staff and given the highest priority. Partnerships with parents to ensure children's safety are very strong.
- Leaders work very effectively with other agencies to keep pupils safe. The principal ensures that pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable are closely taken care of and receive the support they need.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' safety and well-being very well. Teachers continually refer to pupils' personal safety, and pupils speak confidently about how to keep themselves safe online, in public and in the event of a fire. A recent day devoted to water, fire, road and transport safety allowed pupils to learn how to stay safe in different situations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Pupils love their learning because teachers and learning support assistants make it fun. Leaders work very closely with teachers and support staff to create exciting learning opportunities that enable all pupils to achieve highly. Throughout the school, lessons are innovative and engaging. All staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work together and try new things. The use of 'practice stations' in classrooms provides continual opportunities for pupils to refine their skills across a range of subjects. Pupils make choices about their learning and use self-assessment strategies superbly well in every lesson. For example, pupils choose tasks that will develop particular skills. As a Year 1 boy said, 'I have chosen this activity because I want to develop my blurb-writing skills.'
- Pupils are routinely encouraged to reflect on and talk about their learning. The school's system based on dinosaurs, the 'learnosaurs', is extremely well understood by all pupils and has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and approaches to learning. For example, one pupil in Year 2 spontaneously reflected on an activity, without being asked by the teacher, telling his friend that he had been a 'stickosaurus' because he had persevered, tried hard and did not give up.

- Together with leaders, teachers monitor pupils' progress sharply. Staff use what they know about pupils' knowledge and skills to shape activities, sometimes on the spot, to meet individual pupils' needs. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and do whatever it takes to extend and deepen pupils' learning. Challenge is commonplace, and pupils expect to be challenged by their teachers and each other. All pupils, including the most able pupils, make strong and sustained progress and many make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is very well taught. Pupils read with enthusiasm and are keen to talk about the books they are reading. Pupils read daily and are excited about the opening of the new school library. Teachers never miss an opportunity to develop pupils' reading skills, and learning support assistants provide a range of interventions to help pupils read and understand different texts. Pupils' comprehension skills are very well developed and all pupils, especially the most able, are given appropriately challenging reading books.
- Pupils' writing skills are promoted very effectively throughout the school. Pupils learn to write for a purpose in English and in other curriculum subjects. Work in pupils' books and on display is very well presented, and from the Reception Year onwards, children are taught to write neatly in a cursive script. Pupils are very well supported to develop their writing style, and the thematic approaches to the curriculum, alongside the use of rich and exciting texts, help pupils to be imaginative in their writing.
- The teaching of phonics is systematic and effective. Teachers and learning support assistants are well trained and use a range of strategies to help pupils read and write using letter sounds. Leaders have identified the need to improve pupils' spelling further, particularly during independent pieces of writing, and fully embed the recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' spelling throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons, especially the regular opportunities to solve problems and work practically. For example, Year 2 pupils developed their mathematics skills as they created potions from a range of liquids, gels and creams by measuring accurately, reading scales and finding differences. Teachers ensure that pupils use and apply calculation strategies accurately.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, make strong and rapid progress. Teachers understand pupils' individual targets and ensure that the work they set is well matched to meet pupils' needs. Learning support assistants and teachers provide sensitive and effective support in lessons to ensure that these pupils get the most out of all learning activities.
- Pupils respond brilliantly to their teachers and learning support assistants. They quickly settle to their learning and are thirsty for a challenge. They show extremely positive attitudes to their work and a determination and resilience that leads to them making such strong progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Pupils regularly demonstrate high levels of respect for each other. Pupils want their friends to be happy, learn well and have a good time at school. They readily help their friends when learning is tricky. For example, in Year 2, pupils quickly came to help a friend in need, suggesting ideas on how to use a search engine to find out about the polar bear's food chain.
- Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn about different types of bullying. Pupils show a strong understanding of the school's values and the importance of kind words, actions and thoughts. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare, but pupils are confident that the adults will help them resolve any issues quickly.
- Pupils know that their ideas and suggestions are taken seriously. Leaders use 'pow-wows' as sessions where pupils talk and share their ideas about different aspects of the school's work. For example, pupils told inspectors that they asked for more flowers in school and even more opportunities to use equipment at lunchtimes. Pupils proudly shared photographs of how leaders responded to these requests, including the new playground equipment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning in every classroom. Even the youngest pupils have a clear understanding of the school's rules and why behaving sensibly is important for learning.
- Adults are excellent role models for pupils' behaviour. Pupils routinely see adults speaking to each other with respect, courtesy and kindness. Relationships in the school are strong, purposeful and positive.
- School records show that there are hardly any incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders support the small number of pupils who have behavioural needs extremely well. Teachers use a wide range of well-embedded strategies in classrooms to promote nothing but the best behaviour, and pupils respond remarkably well. Pupils say that behaviour is always good and that their learning is hardly ever disrupted by distractions.
- Pupils are proud ambassadors for their school. They show respect for visitors and relish all opportunities to showcase their learning. Rightly, parents are extremely pleased with the way in which all staff promote such high standards of behaviour.
- Pupils love coming to school every day and this is shown in their good attendance, which is above the national average. Pupils know the importance of coming to school and speak positively about the many incentives used to promote good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- As a result of leaders' and teachers' consistently high expectations, pupils make strong and substantial progress from their unique starting points. Pupils attain highly in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is very strong in each year group. Pupils build on the excellent start they make in the early years to make rapid progress throughout key stage 1.
- The proportion of pupils that achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year was well above the national average. All pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium funding achieved the expected standard. These high standards have been maintained again this year. Small group sessions alongside additional phonics interventions are used effectively by teachers to enable all pupils to acquire the phonics skills needed for reading and writing by the end of Year 2.
- From a young age, pupils develop a love of reading. There are many opportunities for pupils to read high-quality texts that are appropriate for their different ages. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that reading activities extend and challenge pupils' thinking. Consequently, pupils are confident in approaching comprehension questions that test their understanding.
- Work in pupils' books and across the curriculum emphasises the excellent progress pupils make in mathematics. Standards are high in each year group and teachers confidently use strategies to enable pupils to master mathematical concepts. A key strength is pupils' ability to solve problems and apply reasoning skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid progress. Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in the school as a result of consistently strong teaching that is extremely well matched to meet all pupils' needs and leaders' careful analysis of how well the pupil premium funding is spent.
- Leaders have high expectations for pupils' progress. The most able pupils also make excellent progress to reach high standards. The vast majority of pupils who exceed the expected standard at the end of the early years make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 to attain highly.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed. Consequently, even the youngest pupils know how to hold conversations and are expected to speak in full sentences.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils develop impressive writing skills. Clever use of displays shows how individual pupils develop their writing over time. Pupils are proud to show their improvements, for example on the 'look how far we have come' noticeboard. Pupils learn the importance of writing accurately, and 'toolkits' to check each other's written work are exceptionally well used. Nonetheless, leaders have identified that pupils' spelling sometimes prevents their writing from reaching the highest standards, and that the recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' spelling need time to fully embed.
- Outcomes in other curriculum subjects are strong. For instance, pupils develop research and prediction skills and apply these in their humanities and science work. Year 2 pupils, for example, predicted which materials would be the worst for absorbing water. Other pupils used a range of sophisticated research skills to ask and answer questions about why people in the past died from everyday illnesses such as chickenpox. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills extremely well across other curriculum subjects.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years staff do an excellent job of creating purposeful learning activities for children to enjoy. Consequently, children are immersed in their play and have fun exploring and investigating in the well-resourced and highly stimulating learning environment. Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard.
- About half of the children join the Reception Year with skills that are typical for their age. Children make rapid progress from the moment they start school, whatever their starting points. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development has been higher than the national average. A high proportion exceed the standard usually expected for the end of Reception Year.
- The early years provision is very well led. Staff work as a highly effective team, sharing very high expectations of the children and each other. Leaders and teachers carefully monitor children's development and have an accurate understanding of each child's next steps in learning.
- All adults use teaching strategies that are highly effective at promoting children's reading, writing and mathematics skills. Teachers make the most of all opportunities to extend and challenge children's thinking and deepen their learning. For example, the use of individualised 'challenge cards' has an extremely positive impact on children's outcomes.
- Children cooperate very well with each other. They share toys and resources readily and behave impeccably. Children are fast to help their friends in their learning, for example as they come up with solutions to how to construct a taller bridge using the large wooden blocks and share out roles and responsibilities in the 'building site'.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Adults keep children safe and provide many real-life opportunities for children to learn about safety. For example, adults talk to children about the importance of wearing hats in the sun and where the emergency exits are for the fire drill.
- Interactions between adults and children are exceptionally strong. Although adults follow children's interests superbly well and step in to extend and engage children's learning, they also know precisely when to step back and allow children time to explore independently. As a result of high-quality conversations and a strong promotion of language throughout the early years, children develop excellent social and communication skills.
- Teachers and support staff are skilled at maximising opportunities for children to develop their early literacy skills. Children write for a purpose in all areas of learning. For example, a group of boys worked collaboratively to create an enclosure for the zoo animals in the outdoor area and were keen to write notices which warned passers-by of the dangers of getting too close to the lion's den.
- Children benefit incredibly well from the high-quality adult-led activities. This is because all adults use highly effective questioning that is tailored to each child's learning needs. Adults have an excellent understanding of how children learn and

develop and know their children extremely well. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the move to Year 1.

- Parents are delighted with the excellent start their children receive in the early years. Parents' free-text comments as part of Ofsted's online survey reveal extremely high levels of satisfaction for all aspects of the school's work, especially the early years provision. As one parent said, 'My child has settled into the school extremely well and is developing a real love of learning.'

School details

Unique reference number	140387
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10031660

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	260
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Deryn Harvey
Principal	Darrell Butler
Telephone number	01895 590110
Website	www.johnlockeacademy.co.uk/
Email address	info@johnlockeacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- John Locke Academy opened as a new academy in September 2014. It is part of The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The principal and vice principal have been in post since the school opened.
- There are currently three forms of entry in the Reception Year, three classes in Year 1 and two classes in Year 2. When the school reaches full capacity in September 2020, there will be three classes in each year group to Year 6.
- Nursery children attend either in the morning or the afternoon on a part-time basis. Children in the Reception classes attend on a full-time basis.

- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. The majority of pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to lessons in all classes at least once. Some of these visits were conducted with the principal or vice principal. Inspectors also undertook learning walks through the early years and key stage 1.
- A group of pupils accompanied the lead inspector on a tour of the school to discuss their views on the school's work, the curriculum and their learning.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading in all year groups and observed reading interventions in key stage 1.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and at lunchtimes. The lead inspector met formally with a group of Year 2 pupils to discuss their views on the school.
- Meetings were held with the principal, vice principal and members of the middle leadership team. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer and the regional educational director from The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents in the playground on the first morning of the inspection and took into account the 99 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors also considered the free-text responses submitted to Parent View.
- A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised by inspectors. This included information related to safeguarding, monitoring of teaching and learning, pupils' outcomes and governing body matters.
- There were no responses to the staff or pupil surveys. Inspectors analysed the outcomes of the school's own pupil satisfaction questionnaires.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Meena Walia

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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