

Name of School:	Lainesmead Primary School
Headteacher:	Alyssia Mepstead
Hub:	Ambition North Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT:	Not applicable

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	The school opted not to have estimates for this review
Date of this Review:	24/04/2026
Overall Estimate at last QA Review:	Effective
Date of last QA Review:	13/03/2025
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	17/05/2022

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers, agrees that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

Leadership at all levels Not applicable

Quality of provision and outcomes Not applicable

AND

Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with additional needs Not applicable

Area of excellence Accredited
Leading a trauma-informed school culture for mental health and wellbeing

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence Creating an embedded school culture which is based on the importance of social, emotional and mental health
28/02/2024

Overall peer evaluation estimate Not applicable

Important information

- The QA Review provides a peer evaluation of a school's practice in curriculum, teaching and learning, and leadership. It is a voluntary and developmental process, and the peer review team can evaluate and offer 'peer evaluation estimates' based only on what the school chooses to share with them.
- The QA Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.

REVIEW REPORT FOR LAINESMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

- The QA Review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. If you choose to share this report, or extracts thereof, externally (e.g. on your website or with parents), please ensure that it is accompanied with the following text:

Challenge Partners is a charity working to advance education for the public benefit. We are not a statutory accountability body. The QA Review does not audit schools' safeguarding or behaviour policies and practices. However, Lead Reviewers and visiting reviewers are expected to follow Challenge Partners' safeguarding policy and report any concerns as set out in the procedures.

1. Context and character of the school

Lainesmead Primary School and Nursery is a local authority maintained school located close to the centre of Swindon. The school currently has 351 pupils on roll and operates a mixed form entry structure. Older year groups (Years 2 to 6) remain two-form entry, while more recent cohorts reflect a transition to one-form entry following demographic changes. The school continues to attract strong parental demand, with waiting lists in Reception and Year 1. Lainesmead serves a wide and diverse community and the pupil-based deprivation indicator is above average, with around two-thirds of pupils living in relatively disadvantaged areas. This includes over a third in the most deprived 20 percent nationally. A significant number of pupils are identified as young carers.

Around half of pupils are White British. There are over thirty languages, additional to English, spoken across the school, with approximately half of pupils speaking English as an additional language (EAL), which is well above the national average. Pupil mobility is also above average, especially in Key Stage 2 as pupils join the school from abroad. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils with an education health and care plan (EHCP) are above the national average. Lainesmead has an embedded trauma-informed approach and is a Thrive School of Excellence.

The school's vision is 'strive, achieve, excel: believe in a limitless future.' The school's six key values are compassion, cooperation, curiosity, resilience, respect, and responsibility.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The highly dedicated headteacher has a strong vision and the school is therefore highly inclusive, with a strong ethos of compassion. She is strategic and decisive, carefully researching and selecting the best evidence-based approaches for her staff and pupils.
- Leaders communicate very well and systems are streamlined. The rationale for school priorities is understood by staff and their wellbeing and workload is very well supported. Middle leaders work together collaboratively and are all aware of each other's priorities and how these contribute to the school development plan. One middle leader said, 'if I cannot get the help I need from my colleagues, I can always go to see the head or deputy as they will

always listen, support and I never feel judged.’ The coaching approach makes me feel respected’.

- Staff training is very well planned and links closely to the school’s strategic plan. Middle leaders speak confidently about the training that they have had and how this has helped them develop in their role. For example, the English lead spoke about the BRIYM (Building Resilience in Young Minds) training she had received and how this had impacted on her own practice when introducing new initiatives with staff.
- Staff use the ‘Truly Great Teaching’ overview to structure coaching conversations. Leaders give clear subject specific strategies to support this and help teachers to plan their structured lessons.
- The headteacher has trained middle leaders on the use of data to support their own analysis and planning of next steps. One middle leader commented that ‘all of our actions are impact focused and data driven’. Year group teachers input data together and leaders moderate data to ensure the accurate analysis of trends and ensure that actions generated are purposeful.
- Governors are actively involved in monitoring the school. A dedicated strategy day with senior leaders supports a shared understanding of strengths and areas for development, which then informs the school development plan. Governors routinely ask leaders to articulate timelines, expected milestones and indicators of success, ensuring improvement work is carefully sequenced and evaluated throughout the year.
- The real-life real learning builds upon the Primary Futures approach, raising pupils’ cultural capital and career aspirations. This is mapped carefully and includes expert visitors and teachers making links in lessons and pupil voice shows that they understand these links. Pupils say they have been inspired to think about their careers and the roles they could have in the future, especially linked to science.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

... the role of the strategic leader of EAL was further developed and refined to clearly articulate the provision and outcomes.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Children in Nursery enthusiastically engage in adult led activities and are developing self-regulation in preparation for Reception. Nursery rhymes with

objects of reference were used to promote early mathematics, with children counting accurately and pronouncing numbers correctly.

- Children in the Early Years engage in their play with confidence, independence and show good levels of self-regulation. Children share and take turns and play cooperatively. For example, Reception children built an obstacle course together, taking turns and playing fairly, saying 'you put that there and then we can share this one'. Staff engage purposefully with children to promote communication skills and vocabulary development. For example, when building a train set staff encouraged children to think about their design by asking 'is it the same or different?'
- In an Early Years phonics lesson, the teacher constantly scanned the room, prompting, praising and addressing misconceptions or incorrect pencil grip or letter formation. This enabled children to record sounds and words accurately without the danger of practising something that was incorrect. For example, one child missed the initial sound in a word he was recording but was able to correct it when prompted immediately by the teacher.
- Pupils can articulate what teachers are focusing on to enhance their learning and understand its impact. Teachers give sentence stems to help pupils discuss their ideas and pupils know how to use gestures in their learning. A Year 6 pupil reflected how the use of talk partners and rules for talk 'help shy people become more confident', while a Year 2 pupil said that 'it makes children more focused and engaged'.
- The consistent approach to reading enables pupils to succeed. Pupils can confidently articulate the skills they are practising through the use of 'Reading Monsters' with one pupil saying, 'we're using the Explainer monster to talk about the text'. In a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher used the visualiser to model text analysis, and pupils then engaged in active and productive partner talk.
- Writing is taught well at Lainesmead and teachers carefully explain the purpose of writing in different genres. A challenging and very well-designed writing curriculum and skilled teaching means that pupils are able to produce extended writing which is well planned, creative and often of a high quality. Pupils clearly take pride in their work which is well presented.
- Maths mastery shows strong fidelity to the agreed scheme across all year groups, with teachers delivering lessons that clearly build upon prior learning. In mathematics lessons, strategies and representations are demonstrated clearly before pupils move onto activities, enabling the vast majority of pupils to work confidently and with increasing independence. For example, Reception children were supported to apply established counting strategies by

lining up dots to ensure accuracy. In Year 2, the teacher made clear connections to pupils' prior learning of number bonds to ten and in Year 5 the teacher explicitly linked the lesson back to a previously used ratio frame.

- Pupils say they have a positive impact on life at Lainesmead through the School Parliament and in their role as Inclusion Champions, and that teachers and leaders respect and act upon their feedback. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils comment that their feedback, linked to the names of the houses across the school, has resulted in a whole school vote and name change taking place from September. A pupil in Year 2 pupil said, 'teachers try to make the school better every day and we have Opal and lots more resources now'.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

- ... all pupils continued to be challenged in their mathematics lessons.
- ... staff considered assessment for learning strategies which enabled them to check for understanding and implemented them within their lessons to enhance engagement for all learners.
- ... lesson activities were designed to ensure more frequent opportunities for pupils to be active participants in their learning.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with additional needs - What went well

- The SENDCo is knowledgeable and has leadership influence in the school. She is strategic in her approach and works closely with the headteacher towards the vision of being a total communication school, and she is able to quality assure teaching and learning and hold staff to account.
- Training is extensive and highly relevant, including recent training on precision teaching as well as one to one reading. Pupil information includes relevant strategies, and staff therefore have a consistent approach to adaptations and scaffolding across Key Stages 1 and 2, enabling pupils with SEND to access the learning at an appropriate yet challenging level for their personalised needs. For example, key vocabulary is highlighted or underlined, widget symbols and scaffolded response sheets are used consistently well, and visualisers are used to model and highlight key aspects of the text.
- Every teacher is a teacher of SEND and adaptations are used consistently well in lessons. In a Year 2 English lesson, due to effective and carefully planned deployment of the teaching assistant, a small group of very high

REVIEW REPORT FOR
LAINESMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

needs pupils were able to take an active part in the learning. For example, they were able to orally rehearse and record their ideas using 'drawing club' as a targeted intervention and one previously non-verbal pupil was excitedly and enthusiastically sharing words and short sentences in context.

- The school has developed a highly embedded Thrive approach, rooted in trauma-informed practice. Staff know how to be and what to do, and pupils are taught how to regulate emotions. All pupils are screened and profiled to identify developmental needs at the right time, with targeted action plans for individuals and groups where gaps are identified. Class Thrive sessions take place twice weekly, alongside daily check-ins, regulation routines and additional lessons focused on trusted adults and emotional awareness. All classrooms include calm areas and calm boxes accessible to pupils, supported by specialist spaces such as the Rainbow Room, Calm Cove, Candy Room and The Burrow. Staff receive ongoing training and Thrive is now extended into the home through Family Thrive, strengthening consistency and support for families alongside school-based provision.
- Pupils demonstrate improved emotional literacy, an increased understanding of equity and stronger peer relationships. Attendance has improved for targeted pupils and compares positively with similar schools, with a clear impact seen in pupils' engagement and learning within lessons. Visitors regularly comment on the calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

- ... the implementation of assistive technology supported the school's journey towards using total communication approaches.

5. Area of Excellence

Leading a trauma-informed school culture for mental health and wellbeing.

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

All staff are trained in the importance of self-awareness. Staff understand how the brain works and its responses to the stress regulation system, enabling them to skilfully support pupils to regulate when needed. Staff recognise the importance of building strong, trusting relationships with their pupils, enabling them to feel safe and ready to learn. Two lessons are taught each week in every class in the school. Pupils are taught mindfulness practices to help them learn how to manage their emotions.

The school environment provides safe places for pupils to go when they are dysregulated and need help calming down to return to learning. Each class has a calm area displaying breathing techniques and containing a "calm down box," which consist of items pupils are taught to use to help regulate themselves. The Key Stage 2 corridor also features the Rainbow Row, while the Tranquility Garden provides a calm outdoor space.

Leaders are adept in identifying issues that affect pupils' learning. They intervene sensitively to help pupils understand and manage their emotions. This means learning is not disrupted. Pupils appreciate going to the 'Burrow' or 'Tranquility Garden' to talk about their feelings. They say that mindfulness helps them to become calm.... pupils' personal development is supported exceptionally well.'

The nurture team is highly trained in supporting dysregulated pupils, helping them understand their emotions, identifying and working with them to fill gaps in their social and emotional development. The nurture higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) works with pupils in one-on-one and group sessions, supporting staff in planning and implementing in-class sessions. They also assist staff as a resource when pupils around the school become dysregulated, and the 'Candy room' and the 'Burrow' are two additional nurture spaces.

5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

Profiling of pupils' social and emotional development shows improvements at class, group and individual level. Pupils are supported in one-to-one or group sessions. Last year 59% of those who were supported improved their attendance and this figure is 64% so far this academic year. In 2024-2025, 41% of pupils who received support made more than expected progress in their reading, while 14% of pupils made more than expected progress in their writing while 29% of pupils made more than expected progress in mathematics. Pupils' regulation has improved with fewer incidents. Numerous case study examples demonstrate the huge impact on individual pupils.

At Key Stage 2, there are emerging strengths alongside continued improvement. Pupils achieve well in some areas, including higher attainment in reading at greater depth, and writing outcomes are broadly in line with national averages. While outcomes are not yet consistently strong across all subjects, there is a clear trajectory of improvement over time.

Progress measures present a mixed but improving picture, with writing broadly in line with national and evidence of strengthening outcomes as teaching becomes more consistent. School assessment information and monitoring evidence show that pupils are increasingly able to explain their learning, apply knowledge and work with greater independence, particularly in reading and mathematics.

5.3 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

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Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse content reports from across the partnership of schools and trusts including using AI tools to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector (sharing these with the partnership) each year. The QA Review reports remain confidential to Challenge Partners and the host school. This ensures that schools embrace the review as a development process, acting as a catalyst for their ongoing improvement. This is the primary purpose of the QA review. However, our aim is that the thematic analysis will demonstrate the additional value of a sector wide overview, illustrated with real-life examples.

For further support following your QA Review, schools can access the School Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national partnership of schools. The School Support Directory can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website. (<https://www.challengepartners.org/>)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)