

Leigh Church of England Primary School

Plants Hill Crescent, Tile Hill, Coventry, West Midlands CV4 9RQ

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have set high expectations for the quality of teaching and for pupils' conduct. Teaching across the school is improving rapidly, and is now consistently good.
- Teachers set tasks that are accurately based on what pupils already know and understand. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for their work, and learning proceeds at a good pace.
- Leaders check carefully on pupils' progress. They identify quickly those at risk of falling behind, and make good arrangements to help them catch up.
- Subject leaders, through the effective checking on classroom practice, contribute well to improving the teaching of English and mathematics. The school is in the early stages of extending this scrutiny to the teaching of science and other foundation subjects.
- Teaching does not do enough to encourage pupils to be curious and think for themselves.
- Teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to pupils' learning. However, their skills or their deployment sometimes do not allow them to have the greatest possible impact.
- Pupils behave well, both in lessons and at social times. They know how to keep themselves safe from a variety of risks.
- Inspection evidence showed that pupils are currently making strong progress in English and mathematics, and developing a good understanding of many other subjects.
- Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum, and some good extra-curricular activities. Leaders promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff have a detailed knowledge of pupils and their circumstances, and provide an impressive quality of care.
- Parents expressed strong support for the school and its leaders. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to engage a small minority of parents with helping their children to learn.
- Rapid improvement in the quality of teaching means that provision in the early years is now good. However, pupils do not benefit consistently from all the recent improvements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
 - providing more work for pupils which arouses their curiosity and fully challenges them to deepen their understanding
 - making sure that leaders and teachers consistently plan so that the skills of teaching assistants have the maximum impact on pupils' learning.
- Deepen the impact of effective leadership and management by:
 - extending the contribution which subject leaders make to improving the quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - ensuring that teaching assistants, including those working in the early years provision, have all the knowledge and skills they require to be successful at all the tasks they perform
 - working intensively with a small minority of hard-to-reach families to enhance the contribution that they make to pupils' learning.
- Consolidate recent improvements in the early years provision by ensuring that strong practice is implemented consistently.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has continued to set high expectations for the staff, so that despite some turnover of teachers, the quality of teaching is improving rapidly and is now consistently good. She is very well supported by other senior leaders, and an increasingly skilled and confident staff. She has ensured that pupils are well mannered and approach their work with enthusiasm.
- School leaders have successfully tackled the issues raised at the last inspection, in particular ensuring that teachers set suitably challenging work for pupils. They have an accurate view of the school's progress, and plan effectively for its continuing improvement. During the inspection, leaders' views on the quality of teaching aligned well with those of the inspectors.
- The school uses a commercial scheme to track pupils' progress. Teachers check their judgements of pupils' work with teachers in other local schools. Leaders are skilled at identifying those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at risk of falling behind. Some teaching assistants have been trained in specific programmes, and provide well-designed additional support for these pupils, so that they can catch up with their classmates. Additional money provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is thereby spent effectively.
- The headteacher links teachers' targets to pupils' progress, and through regular meetings, holds them to account. Staff, including teachers who are at an early stage in their careers, say that training is consistently helping them to develop their skills. Inspection evidence confirmed this.
- Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum, which places due weight on knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. They also take part in a substantial programme of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music. The PE and sports premium is well spent on increasing pupils' voluntary involvement in physical activity, and in participation in inter-school competitions. As a result, pupils' fitness and their skills have improved.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively. Pupils treat each other, staff and visitors with respect, and have a sound understanding of the school's values, which are explicitly linked to how pupils work in the classroom. Pupils have a good understanding of British values because they learn about tolerance and the importance of democracy, and know that their views contribute to the development of the school. Key stage 2 pupils explained to inspectors how a residential visit to a Welsh activity centre had improved their teamwork and made them more resilient.
- Leaders know pupils' barriers to learning well. Aided by an external review, leaders plan the expenditure of the pupil premium carefully and monitor in detail the impact of each initiative on disadvantaged pupils' progress. This rigour ensures that the grant is spent effectively.
- Subject leaders in English and mathematics have helped to adapt commercial teaching materials so that they are well suited to the differing abilities of pupils and the growing skills of teachers. They have identified comparative weaknesses, planned

improvements, and checked on their implementation. Teachers record pupils' progress in all foundation subjects, but the school has only recently begun to extend the same thoroughness of oversight to teaching in these subjects, and this aspect of leadership remains at an early stage.

- Inspection evidence showed that parents think very highly of the school, and particularly of the care that staff provide. Leaders have used imaginative strategies to interest parents in their children's learning, such as inviting them to celebrate pupils' achievements at the end of each topic. Nevertheless, more work needs to be done to ensure that a small minority of parents fully understand how they can support their children's learning, especially in the younger years.
- Leaders check regularly on the attendance, behaviour and academic progress of the very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision.
- Leaders value the opportunities to develop senior and middle leadership provided through the local group of local authority schools.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Governors have a good general overview of the school. They are well informed about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Governors discuss the school frequently with staff and with pupils. They have taken important strategic decisions, such as organising a review of how the school spends the pupil premium. The governing body makes sure that the school operates within its budget, and that money is spent effectively. They are ambitious for the school, and determined that pupils receive the best possible quality of education.
- The governing body ensures that the school's procedures keep pupils safe in all respects. Governors make sure that the right checks are made on staff when they are appointed, and that staff are kept abreast of how to manage possible risks to pupils' safety.
- Governors involve an independent adviser in their management of the headteacher's performance so that decisions about her role are well judged. They scrutinise the headteacher's recommendations about the pay and performance of other staff.
- Governors are determined to develop their own skills. They regularly check on their own effectiveness, and ensure that they benefit from relevant training. The governing body has sought to appoint governors who bring particular skills, such as those in financial management.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's arrangements meet all statutory requirements. All policies and procedures are up to date. Leaders ensure that they act on their detailed knowledge of pupils and the local community to protect them from any possible harm. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are fully trained, vigilant and understand how to alert leaders if they identify any potential risks.

- Inspectors found that staff keep detailed records, and work very effectively with parents and others to help pupils whose situations make them potentially vulnerable. They are persistent when they do not receive an adequate response from other agencies that protect children, and make sure that appropriate action has been taken to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved considerably since the last inspection, and continues to improve. This is primarily because leaders have ensured that teachers plan effectively and set work at an appropriately challenging level for all the pupils in the class. Pupils in Year 4 who explained to inspectors, 'We have chosen the gold task, because it is more challenging and we make more progress,' typified pupils' attitudes.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, and explain new ideas clearly. Literacy is promoted effectively across the school. Teachers use the correct subject-specific terms from the youngest age onwards, such as those used in mathematics or the description of language, and expect pupils to do the same. Pupils have good access to dictionaries and other resources. Teachers require pupils to explain themselves orally in appropriate detail, and so they develop the ability to extend their ideas.
- Pupils' enthusiastic attitudes to learning contribute to their progress. They collaborate conspicuously well, whether listening to each other read or discussing their work in pairs or groups. They respond well to teachers' feedback, and use it to improve their work. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils reported that homework makes a good and varied contribution to their learning.
- Teachers use a variety of techniques to gauge pupils' level of understanding as the lesson proceeds, including targeted questioning and checking pupils' written answers. This enables them to address pupils' misconceptions effectively, fine-tune their support and to move learning on when pupils' understanding is secure.
- Pupils learn phonics effectively. They follow a structured programme for the introduction of new letters and sounds, and teachers use a good range of activities to promote pupils' early reading and writing. The school ensures that there is good continuity in the learning of phonics between the early years and key stage 1. Older pupils learn effectively a range of strategies to understand texts at different levels.
- Inspection evidence showed that writing is taught well. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to write at length, in a variety of styles and for different purposes in different subjects. They require pupils to pay close attention to spelling, punctuation and sentence organisation. Leaders have acted to improve the quality of handwriting across the school, and standards are now generally high.
- The teaching of mathematics is characterised by a good balance of activities. Pupils practise how to perform calculations, and learn to apply their understanding to a variety of practical situations. In doing so, they have to reason mathematically.
- Inspectors saw teaching assistants providing highly effective support for groups of pupils, both in lessons and for those pupils who need to catch up. In these instances, they were very knowledgeable, and proved highly effective in questioning pupils and

breaking their learning down into smaller steps. On a minority of occasions, however, teaching assistants' skills were not well matched to what they were asked to do, and as a result, they were not so effective.

- Within teachers' planning, there is scope for them to pose more questions which arouse pupils' intellectual curiosity, and make them stop and really think hard. On rare occasions during the inspection, teachers did not plan work skilfully enough for pupils to work at the brisk pace commonly seen across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel entirely safe in school. They say that bullying is very rare, and that there are plenty of people to turn to if a problem ever arises. Leaders' commitment, knowledge and vigilance make them singularly effective in securing the welfare of all pupils, but particularly those most at risk. The relatively high number of pupils who join the school other than at the normal points of transfer are rapidly made to feel welcome.
- The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe from a wide range of risks, including those posed by the internet, and by road traffic. Leaders promote healthy eating, and encourage pupils to adopt an active lifestyle. The school makes every effort to ensure that pupils can swim before they leave.
- Through religious education lessons and assemblies, school leaders ensure that pupils learn to understand and appreciate different cultures and traditions. Older pupils explained that they were happy to help younger children, and understood the value of teamwork. Pupils appreciate the new opportunities to adopt leadership roles, for example as members of the school council or house captains.
- Pupils are polite and friendly towards adults, and understand the purpose of coming to school. Some nevertheless lack a little confidence and self-awareness.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It has improved markedly since the last inspection.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, and are willing to work hard. In the classroom, pupils follow instructions, act sensibly and settle to work quickly. They take a pride in their work, and present it neatly even when this involves considerable effort. Pupils persevere, and take the initiative to use dictionaries and other learning resources. They understand and respect the school's reward system, and are keen to earn its benefits.
- Pupils' conduct in the corridors and in the dining room is orderly and responsible. During break and lunchtime, they play happily together, taking advantage of a wide range of play equipment and the various games organised by staff.
- Leaders keep detailed records of behavioural incidents, and these show that serious incidents are very rare. The school has used fixed-term exclusion appropriately on very few occasions. Pupils with challenging behaviour, a number of whom join older year groups from other local schools, respond rapidly to the care and skill which staff invest

in them and come to respect the school's rules. The school makes good use of part-time alternative provision to improve the behaviour of a very small number of pupils.

- Pupils' current attendance is in line with the national average, and the proportion of pupils who are absent persistently is a little below that found nationally. Leaders have tackled successfully a pattern of poor punctuality, and adopted new and sometimes imaginative strategies to promote good attendance. Leaders know the importance of checking on the welfare of any pupils whose absence goes unexplained.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have improved. This academic year, good teaching, pupils' commitment and enthusiasm, and a well-organised curriculum have led to a rapid increase in the progress that pupils make in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects. Information supplied by the school, observations in lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' workbooks all show that many pupils are now attaining the standards expected for their age. Although some still have some catching up to do, the school helps them to do so effectively.
- Leaders have invested in a number of commercial schemes which have provided a clear structure for pupils' learning. At the same time, teachers have adapted the schemes well to meet pupils' needs, and set high expectations in the classroom so that pupils learn at a good pace.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because leaders identify their needs effectively, and secure any specialist support the pupils require. Teachers understand well how to meet these pupils' needs. Leaders check regularly on their progress, and modify the provision if necessary.
- Because attainment in the school has historically been low, there are relatively few most-able pupils in key stage 2. However, the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are now achieving well. This is because teachers set work which builds on what they can already do, and because they have the motivation to stretch themselves.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school has risen slowly over recent years, and so marginally diminished the difference between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally. Recently, however, their progress has increased more rapidly, so that like their peers in the school, they are now achieving well. This improvement reflects the more precise use of the pupil premium to target specific gaps in disadvantaged pupils' knowledge and understanding, and leaders' ongoing success in addressing pupils' social and emotional needs.
- The school promotes pupils' reading effectively, and pupils who spoke with inspectors explained they had good access to a wide variety of books. They are able to use a wide range of reading skills to read texts of an appropriate level of difficulty. The most able readers can read aloud confidently and with impressive expression. Pupils read often in school, and most – but not all – read frequently at home.
- In 2016, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who left the school having achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was considerably below that

found nationally. However, the progress they had made over the course of key stage 2 was at least average in each subject.

- Inspection evidence showed that pupils were also developing good understanding and skills in a range of other subjects, including religious education, physical education, history and art.
- In recent years, too many pupils have left the school without fulfilling their potential. Now, however, rising standards, the broad curriculum and pupils' enthusiasm for their work mean that pupils are increasingly well prepared for secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- The majority of children enter the school either in the Nursery Year or the Reception Year with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. Leaders rapidly identify those children who require particular support, drawing on the assistance of other agencies when necessary. They ensure that additional money provided to support individual pupils or groups of pupils is spent effectively.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who left the Reception Year having attained a good level of development was below that seen nationally. This outcome reflected particular weaknesses in writing and number. Inspection evidence showed that leaders have addressed both these issues well, for example by providing each child with a separate writing book to emphasise its importance.
- The quality of teaching in the early years setting is good. Staff institute clear effective routines and have high expectations for children's conduct. From the outset, they establish warm, caring relationships with the children, and manage their behaviour effectively. Teachers have a secure understanding of both the development of children in the early years and the subject matter they teach. They carefully address any misconceptions that arise, for example in the learning of phonics.
- Staff make regular and precise assessments of children's learning, and use these assessments to plan further activities that are suitably challenging. These assessments are then formally recorded in pupils' learning journals. Teachers' judgements are regularly checked against those made by teachers in other settings.
- Inspection evidence showed that children now make good progress. The curriculum provides a broad range of interesting activities, and pupils are enthused. In one lesson during the inspection, children in the nursery were so excited about their number work that they burst into a spontaneous round of applause when one child sequenced numbers correctly. Children concentrate well, both during activities led by the teacher and those they have chosen themselves.
- The school's procedures to keep children safe and promote their welfare in the early years setting are rigorous, and all statutory requirements are met. Both the indoor and outdoor environments are attractive and well organised, so that learning activities flow smoothly and no time is wasted.
- Teaching assistants generally contribute well to children's progress in the early years. However, on occasion they lack some of the skills necessary to be fully effective in the roles they are asked to perform.

- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. They have succeeded in establishing an effective new staff team who work well together. However, not all aspects of the improving practice, for example in recording assessments, have been fully established in both year groups. Detailed plans are in place to ensure that children experience a smooth transition from the Nursery to the Reception Year, and from Reception to key stage 1.
- Teachers work well with parents to gather information about their children and to explain to parents how children learn. Parents speak very highly of the early years provision, and particularly of the care staff extend to children who may be particularly vulnerable. Nevertheless, as leaders acknowledge, the extent to which parents are engaged with helping their children to learn at home is a little variable, and more needs to be done to secure the active support of a small minority of families.

School details

Unique reference number	103705
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10032603

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Wallace
Headteacher	Debbie Middleton
Telephone number	02476 464 475
Website	www.leigh-coventry.org.uk
Email address	office@leigh.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 April 2015

Information about this school

- Leigh Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Children attend full time in the Reception class, but for morning sessions only in the Nursery class. The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school has experienced quite a high turnover of staff. Three of the current teachers have joined the staff this academic year.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

- A very few pupils attend 'The Key' alternative provision part-time at Parkgate Primary School in Coventry. This setting helps pupils to address their challenging behaviour.
- Some of the support provided through the network of local authority schools has been provided by a local leader in education (LLE).
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 18 lessons, and on one further learning walk. Eight observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. The inspectors also observed breakfast club, extra-curricular activities held after school, and pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders, class teachers, governors and representatives of both the local authority and the Diocese of Coventry.
- Two groups of pupils, selected at random, met with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke to many other pupils informally. One inspector listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors scrutinised in depth the work produced this academic year by some pupils in Years 2, 3, 4 and 6, and the Nursery class. They looked at other workbooks during their visits to lessons. Inspectors considered a wide range of information about pupils' current and recent performance.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included: development plans and evaluations of the school's performance; reports to parents; minutes of meetings held by the governing body; policies; and anonymised information showing how the headteacher manages the performance of teachers. Inspectors scrutinised in detail records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- Inspectors also took account of the 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the comments made using the free-text facility. Inspectors spoke with parents bringing their children to school on the second day of the inspection. The inspectors also considered the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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