Inspection of Leigh Primary School

The Green, Leigh, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8QP

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this small community school are kind and welcoming. The school teaches them the importance of respect and tolerance and they demonstrate these values in their interactions with each other and with adults. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to reflect on their beliefs and attitudes. This helps them to talk about their views and opinions with care and maturity.

There are high expectations for pupils at this school. An ambitious curriculum has been introduced and pupils are achieving well. Pupils are expected to behave well and they are taught to do so. Pupils benefit from a highly inclusive school. This is something that is also valued by many parents. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. Adults in the school know each pupil very well. This helps individual needs to be expertly met.

Pupils are happy at school and have positive relationships with the adults there. They enjoy taking part in the wide range of clubs that are offered to them and the opportunities to perform at nearby theatres. Pupils especially enjoy the new library space and the changes to the outside areas that the school council helped to design.

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

The school has introduced a new curriculum over the last two years. Leaders have made very effective adaptations to this curriculum to ensure that it works for pupils in mixed-age classes. This has involved an innovative approach to how classes are organised and changed over the course of a week. The curriculum is highly ambitious, and leaders have ensured that it is well taught. As a result, pupils can discuss their learning with confidence and with obvious enjoyment.

Pupils are achieving well in most subjects. However, some pupils, including some of those who are disadvantaged, make less progress through the planned curriculum in mathematics. Teaching in this subject is inconsistent. Leaders have already put in place support to address these gaps in pupils' knowledge and to ensure that the effective approaches to teaching this subject that can be found, are used more consistently across the school.

Reading is prioritised in the school. This begins with children in Reception who are building secure knowledge that helps them to read with confidence and fluency. Adults are experts in reading and provide support to those children who fall behind their peers. This well-targeted intervention enables those children to catch up and then keep up. Reading is also a priority for older pupils. High quality texts are used to enrich the curriculum in many subjects and to support the teaching of issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and supported to do so.

The school makes sure that pupils with SEND have any barriers to learning identified. Effective adaptations are then put in place to help them access the curriculum and the full life of the school. All pupils are encouraged to take part in clubs and wider enrichment opportunities. The school tries to remove any obstructions to pupils being involved and feeling included.

The approach to PSHE has been very well planned. Leaders have consulted the community to make sure that the curriculum addresses pupils' concerns and that it is responsive to issues as they arise. Pupils are taught to how to engage in debates about contemporary issues. They consider their own and others' views and talk about them thoughtfully. This prepares them for life in modern Britain. It also helps to build their confidence. In the Reception class, adults help to develop the children's communication skills with effective questioning and carefully planned dialogue. Throughout the school, pupils are taught the importance of listening to each other carefully and understand the need to respond respectfully. They demonstrate this throughout the day.

The school also teaches pupils routines for learning. Pupils move quickly from one activity to another in a way that means they are ready to learn. Pupils behave very well and disruption to lessons is rare. When it does occur the school deals with it quickly and effective support is put in place. Recurrence of poor behaviour is uncommon.

There have been rapid changes to help improve the school and these improvements have been sustained. These changes have been very well managed by leaders at all levels. This has meant that staff have felt well supported and as a result they have been able to focus on those things that will be of most benefit to their pupils. Governors know the school very well and have worked with leaders in school to set a strategy for improvement that has had a demonstrable impact in a short period of time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of mathematics is not as consistently strong as it could be. This means that at times pupils are unsure of how to complete tasks or use the manipulatives they have been given as support. The school should ensure that teachers are confident in modelling how tasks should be completed and how support should be used.

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	118278
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296254
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rahim Rajan
Headteacher	Jenna Halfhide (headteacher) Joanne Shobbrook (acting headteacher)
Website	www.leighprimaryschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There was an acting headteacher in post at the time of the inspection. The substantive headteacher was on maternity leave. Both the substantive and acting headteacher attended the inspection together in full.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 met with leaders including the headteacher, acting headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with, local governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also discussed curriculum planning in a wider range of subjects including PE and computing.
- 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 met with a range of staff and considered their views through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally and informally around the school, in lessons and at playtime. Inspectors took account the views of parents through the responses to the Ofsted Parent View and a letter that was sent to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Mark Enser, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz McIntosh	Ofsted Inspector

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