LEIGH Primary School

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Ofsted?

Ofsted stands for the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.

Ofsted is the UK government department responsible for inspecting schools and other social care services for children.
Ofsted was introduced in 1992 as the Office for Standards in Education and in 2007 its brief was expanded to include children's services work relating to social care and the courts.
It is part of the Department for Education (DfE) and is headed by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman (who has been Chief Inspector since 2017).
Ofsted is only responsible for inspecting schools in England; Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own inspecting bodies.

What are Ofsted's main responsibilities?

The responsibilities of Ofsted fall into three areas:
Ofsted inspects: maintained schools and academies, some independent schools, and many other educational institutions and programmes outside of higher education childcare, adoption and fostering agencies and initial teacher training
Ofsted regulates: a range of early years and children's social care services, making sure they're suitable for children and potentially vulnerable young people
Ofsted reports: publishing reports of their findings so they can be used to improve the overall quality of education and training
informing policymakers about the effectiveness of these services

What are the Ofsted ratings?

There are four possible Ofsted ratings that a school can receive. These Ofsted grades are based on inspectors' judgements across four Ofsted categories – quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development of pupils, leadership and management as set out in their Education Inspection Framework last updated in 2019.

Ofsted Grade 1: Outstanding
Ofsted Grade 2: Good
Ofsted Grade 3: Requires Improvement
Ofsted Grade 4: Inadequate

Ofsted Grade 2: Good

A Good school will receive Grade 2 for most if not all inspection categories, with one or two categories rated Grade 1 or Grade 3. Good schools will provide for all their pupils' educational needs, and prepare them well for the next stage in their lives.
Good schools usually receive a short, one-day inspection from Ofsted once every four years. They will only be put through a full school inspection if there is a dramatic fall in performance.

Ofsted Grade 3: Requires Improvement

A school rated Requires Improvement will receive a Grade 3 in most inspection categories. These schools still provide an acceptable quality of education and care for children, but will have areas where they could improve.
Schools rated Requires Improvement usually have another full Ofsted inspection within two years of their last inspection (the official government guidance says 30 months but it is almost always sooner).

Ofsted Grade 4: Inadequate

If a school is rated Inadequate, it has received a Grade 4 in most inspection categories, and a Grade 3 for Leadership and Management. This means the school is failing to provide an acceptable quality of education and care for children and will need to make significant improvements immediately.

What are the four Ofsted categories?

The four categories covered in an Ofsted inspection are:

- **Quality of education –** how well the school provides the education pupils need at that stage of their learning.
- **Behaviour and attitudes** – how pupils, staff, parents and governors feel about the school, and how pupils behave in and out of lessons.
- **Personal development of pupils** – how well the schools provides services such as pastoral care, PSHE etc., preparing them for the future.
- **Leadership and management** – how well the school's Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy Heads and other school leaders) manage the school.

What does it actually mean for me as a parent that Leigh has received a 'Requires Improvement' Judgement?

These schools still provide an acceptable quality of education and care for children. The school will have good areas but others will require development. This does not mean any areas are inadequate but just that they have not received a 'good' judgement overall in enough areas of the framework.

For parents this means reading the report and reading information from the school about how they intend to address areas for development so that you feel confident with the steps being made and how quickly these areas are being addressed. If you feel you need clarification on any areas of the Ofsted report then you should ask the question to the Senior Management Team and the Governing Body so that you feel comfortable with the steps being taken.

Dependent upon how recent a judgement is given to a school, Ofsted ratings are not always reflective of current standards in any school and thus with a recent Ofsted parents are more informed than they might ordinarily be. A Requires Improvement judgment that has been recently given also provides a clear framework and mandate for the school to improve quickly and ensures that practices and standards are acted upon swiftly – often bringing exciting and beneficial changes and investment to the school.

How can we have gone from Good to Requires Improvement?

The Ofsted framework goalposts changes dramatically in 2019 shortly before the Pandemic broke. Since then the school did not have the capacity to respond to the strategic development of the Quality of Education and its design as well as concentrating on the COVID restrictions and the operational changes and remote offer (alongside the financial restrictions this brought). Although we are still coping with COVID transmission in school, we are less restricted than we were prior and systems for remote offer are in place to allow us to concentrate on strategic development and bring about reform quickly – particularly with the skilled and experience staff and new leadership structure we have in place since September.

Did Ofsted inspect all aspects of the school?

Ofsted uses a range of methods to construct a hypothesis on day one based upon deep dives they conduct into the curriculum. At Leigh, they looked at Early Reading (when the new SSP was not yet in place), Maths, PE and Science. Therefore not all areas of the curriculum were looked at due to the short period of time Ofsted Inspections are conducted in. The team met with Senior Leaders to discuss behaviour, personal development, pupil premium and Safeguarding; all of these areas received good ratings.

Does the leadership agree with the Ofsted judgement?

The school leadership accept the judgement as a picture of how the school has been impacted over the last 18 months and fully take on board and agree with most areas for development. Indeed, no school should ever be complacent and should always see improvements in every area of their school regardless of Ofsted rating.

This being said the leadership team, staff and governing body feel the rating is a judgement on how the school exited the pandemic and the past and is not reflective of the plans, structures and talent that exists in this very special community school to move it forward.

What are the targets in the Ofsted report? How are these targets going to benefit my child?

The targets are based upon:

Early reading
This target has brought £5000 of funding to support the school to implement a new SSP which has already been introduced alongside support from the English Hub. This will (and already is) benefiting the children and staff as they have a rigorous scheme with all resources provided to follow with fidelity to coincide with their excellent subject knowledge and teaching practice.

Curriculum design and progression
Some areas of the wider curriculum such as PE require review in terms of the sequencing and progression of objectives. Other subjects in the curriculum are also under review including humanities and computing. These being subjects that will have increased investment to provide knowledge and vocabulary rich schemes of learning by the second Spring Term. This does not mean that curriculum progression is not in place and being taught, just that we want to increase the rigour and knowledge that we are providing the children.

Providing training
All of the school development plans will be introduced alongside training for all staff and this upskills the Leigh Team further to deliver a high quality education and consistent standards across the school.

How quickly should we see the improvements?

These improvements are already being seen and various documentation from the school details their milestones and actions already. Please see the Quality of Education School Development Overview, the Parent Survey Response and the Headteacher Ofsted Letter.

What is the Local Authority doing to support the school?

All schools have a School Improvement Advisor that makes visits to the school to support and advise the head teacher, staff and leaders and he will supporting the school. Local authority specialist advisors are available to support the school at their request and the English Advisor has already been supporting leaders and providing advice and sounding board for their developments in early reading.

What is the role of the Governors to ensure that the school makes the necessary improvements?

Governor's work together to provide independent oversight of the management and operation of a school, with the aim of improving the quality of education provided and raising standards. They make visits with particular focuses on areas of school development, provide challenge and reflection by asking questions to leadership, review evidence and action plans against milestones and support the headteacher to make necessary reforms.

What was the actual process of the Ofsted Inspection and what evidence was viewed?

This is detailed in the inspection report under 'Information about this inspection.' It is important to note that the Ofsted inspectors did not look at the current school development plan that had been developed by new Leadership Team with the new underlying vision and goals which have been reviewed by the governing body.

What's going change?

- The children will know more and be able to do more using a greater range of vocabulary across the entire curriculum which will be delivered to a consistently high standard.
- The provision for Early Reading in terms of fidelity to a scheme, enriched resources for the staff and children will be enhanced.
- Wider CPD opportunities for staff and governors
- Increased rigour in our SEND provision

What's going to stay the same?

- The high quality teaching staff who nurture and provide enriching and engaging learning opportunities for your children.
- The high standards of behaviour and mutual respect shown between children and staff.
- The commitment to developing the whole child and ensuring that their personal development prepares them for society and adult life.
- The school's commitment to working with you in a shared partnership for the betterment of your children's future.
- Mr Thacker will be remaining with the school to continue to inspire our children to develop a healthy lifestyle through sport.

Was the fact we have split classes a factor in our judgement?

No. Ofsted had no opinion or judgement upon our split classes.

What are we most proud of?

- **Our children and how they spoke so positively about their school, how they behave and how they are all growing as individuals.**
- **Our staff who passionately strive to provide the best for our pupils.**
- **Our community which always supports and works with Leigh School in the best interests of our students.**
- **Our guiding principles of ACT RIGHT and our ethos of 'Sharing, Caring and Learning Together' that permeates every part of school life.**