

Leighton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111065
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	356858
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	510
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Michaela Williams
Headteacher	Mr Glyn Turner
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons, observing 17 teachers and 17 classes. They also held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, pupils' work, safeguarding arrangements, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 156 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 39 staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How challenging teaching is, especially for the more-able pupils.
- The effectiveness of pupil target-setting practices in helping them to improve their work.
- How rigorously assessment is used within the Early Years Foundation Stage to shape children's learning and development.

Information about the school

Most pupils in this larger-than-average primary school are of White British heritage, with very few who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The school has a wide variety of curriculum awards, as well as Healthy School status and the Activemark award. The school has undergone significant staffing change since the last inspection. There is an independently managed pre- and after-school facility on site that is subject to a separate report, which can be found on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It makes a considerable difference to the lives of the young people in its care. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection survey are highly supportive of its work.

Despite significant changes in staffing and a dip in attainment and pupils' achievement two years ago, the school has recovered its past levels of outstanding performance in key areas. Children enter the Nursery with basic skills that vary year-on-year but are overall below those typical for their age. They make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the outstanding provision, welfare arrangements and leadership and management there. Attainment by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 is high and learning and progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 are good. Progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding, due to the additional support they receive.

Teaching is good overall, with some that is outstanding. Good pace and challenge, varied and often practical activities, good use of assessment and animated teaching are characteristics of the better lessons. The curriculum is outstanding, providing pupils with exciting experiences and opportunities to learn about the world. The coverage of modern foreign languages is a particular strength of the school. Behaviour and attendance are both good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, meaning that they are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage in their learning. Pupils say they feel very safe, their understanding of healthy living is very good and their contribution to the school and wider community is excellent. Care, guidance and support are also outstanding, reflecting the high levels of commitment and skill among the staff.

The senior leaders and managers provide outstanding direction for the school and have focused staff highly effectively upon improvement. Inconsistencies remain, however, in the operation and monitoring of the marking and feedback policy. Self-evaluation is accurate and plans for further development are excellent. Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding, as is partnership working and the promotion of equal opportunities. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Governance is good and, given the outcomes, the school provides excellent value for money. Actions to overcome weaknesses have been concerted and highly effective and, as such, its capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that there is consistently good or better practice in the marking of pupils' work and provision of feedback, so that all pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Attainment is high and achievement is outstanding. The school is correct in its evaluation that learning is good in the vast majority of lessons and improving rapidly, with pupils well engaged as a result of the good and sometimes outstanding teaching. The vast majority of pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise their skills well. They are keen to succeed and work at a good pace. Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 has been consistently high in the large majority of cases since the last inspection but dipped slightly in 2009, especially in English, largely due to changes in staffing and assessment practices. As a result of a robust programme of support and challenge, achievement has now recovered to previously high levels. Most pupils now make at least good progress from their starting points, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make accelerated progress. This is due to the very high quality of support programmes put in place by the school, often led by highly trained teaching assistants and other specialists. Inspection evidence and school tracking data show that attainment for current groups is high and that most pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets the school has set.

Pupils say they feel very safe in the school and enjoy their learning. As a result, their attendance and behaviour are good. The school has recently developed its resources for information and communication technology and pupils' skills in this area are highly developed. Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle, reflected in the awards the school has gained. Pupils take full advantage of the extensive range of sporting and cultural opportunities provided by the school and other activities made available through its excellent partnership working. The extent to which pupils take part in the daily life of the school is outstanding. Regular involvement by pupils in reviewing teaching and learning, supporting each other as trained peer mentors, contributing to the school's organisation through the school and class councils and running community activities, all contribute strongly to their personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is reflected in the warm, friendly and cooperative atmosphere within the school where learning is highly valued. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching, including the use of assessment to support learning, is good overall. There is some outstanding practice but also a very small amount that is satisfactory. The school has an excellent support and training programme in place to tackle this. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this and different teaching methods successfully to make learning interesting and relevant. Challenge for the more able is good. The use of small group working and talking partners is often very well developed in these lessons, helping to promote pupils' language skills and confidence. Pupils have clear targets for improvement, know them well and they are highly effective in shaping their learning. Assessment and tracking systems have recently been reviewed and the school feels that it now has an even better understanding of pupils' progress and achievement. Marking and feedback on what pupils need to do to improve aspects of their work are, however, inconsistent across the school and limit some pupils' understanding of how to make the best progress.

The curriculum is outstanding and helps promote high quality outcomes. It provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning and is constantly reviewed to meet the changing needs of pupils. There are highly tailored programmes for a wide range of groups of pupils and a strong focus upon developing pupils' literacy skills to enable them to access learning as effectively as possible across all subjects. The school has been at the forefront of successful curriculum design and innovation for some years

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and contributed significantly to national learning strategies. The provision for modern foreign languages, science, history and geography is extensive and contributes significantly to pupils' understanding of the diversity of the world. Cross-curricular provision is mainly outstanding and there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are very well supported.

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are outstanding. The success of this provision is seen in the often excellent progress pupils make in developing their personal skills by the time they leave the school. Transition arrangements for pupils joining and leaving the school are comprehensive and often involve older pupils supporting newcomers and younger children. Links with the pre- and after-school provision are excellent. The family support worker is highly effective in supporting potentially vulnerable pupils and families and the schools' work in this respect is deeply embedded among all staff. High quality speech and language therapy is provided across the school. The school has developed its own very successful accredited training for teaching assistants and other helpers, which local schools and organisations take advantage of. Pupils are highly confident any concerns they raise will be dealt with effectively. Attendance is very well monitored and continues to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for the school. Within the context of significant changes in personnel over the last two years, they are highly successful in sharing this vision with all staff and members of the governing body. As a result, morale is very high and belief in the school's success permeates all levels of the school. Self-evaluation and monitoring practices are highly developed and contribute to very well-focused plans for driving further improvement. The recovery plan to address the recent dip in attainment and progress has been highly successful, and its impact well evidenced through a return to high learning outcomes. Elements of the leadership and management of teaching and learning remain inconsistent, however, notably the consistency of practice in implementing the good marking and feedback policy. The promotion of equal opportunities is excellent, with minimal differences between groups of pupils. There is no evidence of discrimination and excellent monitoring of this is an important part of the schools' outstanding care, guidance and support practices. The school works extremely well with parents and carers and a wide range of partners to support pupils in their learning. The school leads on many learning initiatives, as well as being one of only three schools nationally partnered with the Goethe Institute for the promotion of international understanding and German studies. With the school's links with

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many other institutions, both locally and nationally, promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Safeguarding practices are good, with best practice clearly evident in site safety, staff training and very robust vetting and checking procedures. Although recently restructured, the governing body is highly knowledgeable about the school. It carries out its support and challenge functions well, especially through regular visits and support for the literacy programmes within the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Comprehensive induction arrangements, including home visits, ensure that children and their parents and carers receive a warm welcome to the school. Children settle very happily in the very safe environment. The majority enter the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. There is considerable movement of children into and out of the setting at the Nursery/Reception transition but, throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children make outstanding progress. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make excellent progress. This is because of the excellent teaching and levels of care provided. Children's learning is very well assessed and recorded and the data used to inform the next stage in their learning. Parents and carers are very well informed about their children's welfare and progress. Teachers plan an exciting range of activities, with an excellent balance between those they direct and others that children choose for themselves. Children within Reception are also involved in weekly planning of their learning activities. There has been considerable development of the outdoor learning area since the last inspection and this contributes very well to children's learning. By the time they leave, children play and work together very well in this highly effective setting. All major aspects of provision are outstanding, as well as the leadership and management of them. The highly skilled staff are exceptionally

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well led. Staff training is outstanding, there are high quality plans in place for further improvement and safeguarding arrangements are good, reflecting whole-school practices.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires are very happy with all aspects of the school. They consider it provides a safe and caring environment for their children and that it is well led and managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leighton Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 156 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 510 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	62	50	32	3	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	114	73	36	23	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	83	53	66	42	5	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	104	67	45	29	6	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	111	71	40	26	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	89	57	54	35	6	4	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	49	71	46	3	2	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	78	50	62	40	5	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	88	56	57	37	5	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	87	56	59	38	5	3	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	38	74	47	7	4	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	108	69	44	28	2	1	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	72	35	22	3	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leighton Primary School, Crewe, CW1 3PP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the team and me when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it.

Leighton Primary is an outstanding school. You get an excellent start to your learning in the Nursery and Reception classes and make very good progress there as a result of the outstanding teaching and care you receive. The good and sometimes outstanding teaching in the main school and the excellent range of subjects that you cover in lessons mean that you leave at the end of Year 6 with high levels of attainment. Well done! Those of you who find learning difficult make especially good progress because of the outstanding levels of care and support provided by the school. You say you feel very safe in school, have a very well-developed sense of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and are highly involved in school and local community life. Your behaviour is good and so is your attendance.

Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is the development of your skills in information and communication technology. As a result, you are very well prepared for the next stage in your learning. The headteacher, the governing body and staff work very well together to make your school successful, helped by excellent working with partner organisations. I have asked the school to consider the following point to help it to improve further.

- Make sure that all the marking of your work is of at least good quality in order that you know clearly how to improve it further.

You can help by telling your teachers how best you learn and letting them know if you have any problems. I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead inspector

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