

# St Leonard's Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124199
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380832
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Shelly East
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Alebon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	St Leonard's Avenue Stafford ST17 4LT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 20 lessons taught by nine teachers. They also met with parents, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment, evidence for monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and safeguarding policies and procedures. Inspectors also analysed the responses to the questionnaires for pupils and staff, and the 102 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- What is being done to narrow the gaps in attainment for different groups of pupils in Key Stage 1, and for boys in writing in Key Stage 2?
- Are all leaders and managers sufficiently focused on improving teaching and learning, and do they all have the skills to do this?
- What evidence does the school have to support its judgements that provision and progress are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The previously privately run nursery became part of the school at the beginning of this school year. It now forms the Nursery year in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school also has before- and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body. It has achieved National Healthy Schools status, the Artsmark Silver award, and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Good quality teaching ensures that learning is an exciting, mostly practical experience for the pupils, relevant to their daily lives. For example, in order to increase pupils' understanding of the features of different styles of journalistic writing, a burglary was staged in the Year 6 classroom and pupils became journalists from different newspapers whose job it was to write a report on it. Innovative approaches and a curriculum that is responsive to pupils' learning needs are key features of the good learning observed. Because of this, learning can be, and often is, quickly adapted to meet the needs of different groups and, where necessary, individual pupils. This is evident in the adjustments made to topics to suit year groups that have a greater number of boys or girls. Pupils achieve well and, currently, attainment is above average in Year 6. It has been significantly above average in the national tests in three out of the last four years.

Much is in place to close the gaps in learning evident in the Year 2 results, and any differences are eliminated by Year 6. Good assessment systems contribute to this and the information gained from them is used effectively in planning. Literacy skills are incorporated well into all work. Boys talk positively about writing and which styles they prefer, and, although there is more to do here, their written work is improving. All pupils know their writing targets, and most remember to use them in all of their writing. Good marking ensures that pupils are well focused on doing so. However, more-able pupils do not always make consistently good progress in writing in all classes. The school recognises that different year groups have different areas for improvement in mathematics and has set different priorities for each class. In doing so, it has rightly sustained the focus on practical problem solving and relating mathematical learning to everyday life. Numeracy skills are incorporated into curricular planning, but pupils' books show these skills are not given the same emphasis as literacy in topic work.

Children make good progress in Reception and are well prepared for their work in Year 1. A good start has been made on establishing the nursery as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, but the physical distance between the Nursery and Reception classes limits opportunities for them to work together. The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that these pupils make progress that is at least as good as their classmates. It also means that when problems arise, provision is available to suit their needs. Behaviour is good, and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. They are reflective and caring and they readily accept and respect

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differences in others.

All of the above is made possible by clear, well-focused leadership and management. All leaders and managers fulfil their roles well, and are becoming increasingly involved in the insightful monitoring and evaluation that are part of the school's drive for improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and well founded and the school development plan is an effective tool for improvement. Together with the good improvement on the issues raised at the previous inspection, these features give the school good capacity for sustained improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Integrate the nursery more fully into the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity of provision and progress across the two year groups.
- Ensure boys and more-able pupils make consistently good progress in writing in all classes.
- Promote numeracy skills more explicitly across the curriculum.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Children start school with skills that are broadly as expected for their age but with weaknesses in language and literacy. Their good progress ensures they leave Year 6 with attainment that is, in most years, significantly above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. Many of the gaps in their learning have significantly reduced by the time they reach Year 6. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also make good progress. All speak English fluently, and staff are careful to check they understand any new vocabulary being introduced.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. They talk about the work in their books with a great deal of pride and speak with great fluency about the learning they were engaged in at the time. For example, Year 5 pupils showed good levels of empathy with evacuees as they talked about the postcards they had written when in role as evacuees. They showed a good understanding of how uncomfortable it must have been to have to wear gas masks during World War 2. The work in their books shows that pupils of all abilities make good progress, and that their learning is at the right level. Pupils readily discuss their targets. They can articulate how close they are to achieving them and what happens when they do. They appreciate how teachers' marking helps them in this.

Pupils relish the mathematical challenges set for them. For example, Year 6 pupils made exceedingly rapid progress when they rose to the challenge of finding the number of squares on a chess board. This led to more-able pupils working out an algebraic formula to solve the problem. Pupils report that they enjoy their mathematical learning because their teachers 'make it fun with real life problems, competitions and quizzes'. Pupils use their literacy and information and

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communication technology skills well in all of their work. This was evident in a French lesson in Year 4, and as Year 6 pupils created a quiz with multiple-choice answers based on their developing knowledge of Ancient Egypt. In doing so, they demonstrated skills well beyond those expected for their age. Art work around the school is also of a consistently high standard.

Pupils say adults are all approachable and responsive to their needs. They report that the occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and fairly, and that harassment of any sort is not tolerated. They say that while behaviour is mostly good, some pupils with behavioural difficulties require additional help in order to behave well. Pupils make healthy eating choices and a high proportion participate in extra-curricular sporting activities. Almost all parents and carers say the school helps their children to be safe, fit and healthy.

Pupils readily accept responsibility, for example, as school councillors, house captains and play leaders. The play leaders are proud of their roles in supervising and distributing equipment at play and lunchtime, and assisting in resolving disputes among younger pupils. Pupils arrange charity events, raise large amounts of money for charitable causes, and participate in a wide range of activities in local schools and in the community. Their understanding of different faiths and cultures at home and abroad is developing well. Their good personal skills, which include above-average attendance, and their well-developed basic skills, ensure they are well prepared for their future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

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

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## How effective is the provision?

Imaginative teaching adds to pupils’ enjoyment of learning and to their good progress. This was evident in the burglary set up in Year 6 to increase pupils’ understanding of journalistic reporting, and in the shape detective work undertaken by pupils in Year 1. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long when pupils are itching to get to their tasks, or the pace of learning slows, for example, when they do not pull the whole class together to address something about which several pupils are unsure. Typically, however, work is planned well taking account of pupils’ different stages of learning, and lessons are adjusted as they proceed to suit different elements in pupils’ learning. The flexibility built into the curriculum enables this to happen easily. The careful choice of topics in each year group ensures that boys and girls are equally well motivated.

Links between subjects have become better embedded in planning this year, but have not yet had time to make a full impact on the school’s outcomes. However, pupils are unanimous in saying that the new approaches help them to learn better because ‘learning is fun’. Progress in the development of skills in each subject is tracked, and learning is adjusted to ensure any gaps are filled. Staff work together well to do this. Pupils’ learning and personal development are enhanced well by a good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs that add to their enjoyment of learning and raise their awareness of life in the wider world.

Extensive links with external agencies ensure that where intervention is needed to support learning and/or personal development, it is well matched to pupils’ needs and gets their progress back on track. This especially benefits pupils who find learning difficult, for whatever reason. Good support is also provided for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties. Good communication between teachers in different year groups, and good links with the local high school, ease transition for pupils from one year to the next and on into high school. The before- and after-school clubs give pupils a positive start and end to their school day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher gives a very firm steer to the school’s work, and enjoys the respect of parents and carers, pupils, staff and the governing body. The senior leadership

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team embeds ambition and drives improvement effectively through strong teamwork and ambitious targets. These are based on an in-depth analysis of data and a secure understanding of the capabilities of staff and pupils. Priorities for improvement are derived directly from astute monitoring and evaluation, in which middle managers and subject leaders are playing their part increasingly well.

Governance is good. The governing body uses its expertise well to help determine the school’s strategic direction, manage finances and set challenging academic targets. Its role in challenging the school about its academic outcomes is developing well, and it has a good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It ensures all groups of pupils make equally good progress and are fully included in all it has to offer. It has undertaken a comprehensive audit of its context across all strands of community cohesion. It looks beyond its own walls by drawing the wider community into its work, and developing pupils’ national and global awareness. The well-established links with a school in Uganda contribute to this.

The school adopts recommended good practice in safeguarding, including child protection. The environment is safe and secure, all training is up to date, and the school is vigilant in caring for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, for whatever reason.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective induction procedures ensure that children and their parents and carers



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settle quickly into the established routines of school life. For the first time, this includes entry to nursery, which has gone well. Improvements in leadership and management, and to the key worker system, both of which are now good, have contributed to improvements in planning, organisation and outcomes in this age group. Regular dialogue with parents and carers ensure they are involved in their children’s learning, and that children’s health, safety and well-being are given due attention at all times.

There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated/selected activities. Adults are skilled at knowing when to intervene in activities to move learning on. They assess and track children’s learning well, and use the information to determine the next steps in their learning. Children are starting to work and play together, take turns and help each other. They enjoy books, and make good attempts at writing, counting, and recognising different shapes. Girls perform better than boys, particularly in writing. The school is tackling this, for example, by encouraging boys to write during time spent in the role play and outdoor areas. There are clear intentions to integrate the nursery fully into the Early Years Foundation Stage, but the physical separation of the nursery and Reception areas limits opportunities to do this well. The school plans to address these issues as much as it can within the limitations imposed by the building.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parent and carers are highly satisfied with what the school does for them and their children. They all feel that their children make enough progress and that teaching is good. Comments such as the school is ‘warm and supportive’, ‘well run’, ‘has a caring attitude towards the children’ and a ‘friendly atmosphere where every child is valued’ are typical of the many positive remarks received. Parents and carers also value the workshops the school has set up for them to learn how to become involved effectively in their children’s learning, and they praise the high levels of communication that keep them up to date with what and how well their children are doing. Inspection findings support all of these views.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Leonard's 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	75	23	23	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	75	24	24	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	58	57	41	40	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	60	41	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	67	66	35	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	67	66	34	33	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	69	31	30	1	1	0	0
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)	60	59	38	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	64	63	33	32	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	46	45	44	4	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	52	43	42	1	1	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	64	33	32	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	73	72	27	26	0	0	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



9 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Leonard's Primary School, Stafford, ST17 4LT**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was a real pleasure to talk with you about your work and what you do there. You are clearly very proud of your school, and it was good to hear from each class that they thought their teacher was the 'best'. You told us that teachers make learning 'fun' for you with a range of challenges, quizzes and competitions that help you to learn better, and you are right. You go to a good school where staff care for you and guide and support you well so that you make good progress in learning and in personal development. We noted that you behave well, and are confident that you can turn to any member of staff should you need it. You clearly enjoy coming to school, and you have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy. Those who lead and manage the school keep a close check on how well you are doing, and quickly take steps to help you should you fall behind for whatever reason.

Within this positive picture, we found a few areas where the school could do even more to help you reach higher standards in your work. They are:

- to find ways to help the nursery and Reception work together more easily now that the nursery is part of the school
- in writing, to help boys to catch up with girls and to ensure that more-able pupils always make good progress
- to give you more opportunities to use and extend your numeracy skills in topic work.

You can all help in this by continuing to work hard, listening to your teachers, and thinking about how you can use your literacy and numeracy targets in all of your work. We hope you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now, for the rest of your lives.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell  
Lead inspector

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