

# St Leonard's CofE (A) First School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124381              |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Staffordshire       |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 380879              |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 23–24 November 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Clive Lewis         |

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>                      | First  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–9  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 39   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                             |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Michael Evans                                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | David Mellor                                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 13 May 2009                                    |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Ipstones<br>Stoke-on-Trent<br>ST10 2LY         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01538 266292                                   |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector who observed six lessons taught by three teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, and tracking and assessment data. Questionnaires from 29 parents and carers, 17 pupils and 10 staff were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effective is the quality of provision for the outdoor curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- How consistent is the quality of teaching across the school?
- How effective and rigorous are the school's tracking and assessment systems?

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than most other schools of its type. It has two mixed-age classes – Reception and Years 1 and 2, and Years 2, 3 and 4. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups and all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies significantly across year groups but is in line with the national average overall. The school has been awarded the ActiveMark and has achieved Healthy School status.

**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

St. Leonard's is a good school. The headteacher has overseen a number of significant improvements since the last inspection. This has resulted in improved progress across the school and above average standards overall by the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school. Standards in writing, however, are not as high as those in reading and mathematics because sometimes opportunities are missed to extend writing across different subjects. The school's assessment and tracking systems are rigorous, and well conceived priorities have been set for further improvement. Although subject leaders and curriculum coordinators have a satisfactory understanding of standards and progress in their subject areas, they have not had the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching or analyse data. Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school. One parent commented, 'I feel that the school has gone to great lengths to meet my child's particular needs and I believe the staff's commitment to their vocation is outstanding'. Another wrote, 'My child really loves coming to school and is not at all happy when she has to miss school due to illness.' Staff want the best for each child and work very closely with families to achieve this goal.

The quality of teaching in most lessons is good or better. Teachers and other adults use the school's assessment procedures effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils are able to learn effectively and develop confidence, regardless of their individual circumstances. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the need for healthy lifestyles. Parents and carers say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree enthusiastically. This is clearly reflected in the above average levels of attendance. Behaviour is good across the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are curious about the world around them and embrace new experiences enthusiastically. They respect each others' needs and interests and engage well with pupils from different religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. The school has good partnerships with a wide range of external agencies which support learning well. It has strong links with the local community and is developing links with communities in the United Kingdom and overseas in order to further enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures and lifestyles. Children make a good start in the

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Early Years Foundation Stage because of good teaching and the high quality of care. However, the range of resources and activities available in the outdoor area is not as stimulating and varied as inside. The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and what needs to be done next. The progress made since the last inspection and the enthusiasm of staff and pupils give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

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

- Improve standards in writing, so that they match the high standards achieved in reading and mathematics, by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across a range of subjects and genres.
- Ensure that subject coordinators develop a better overview of how to raise attainment further by providing more opportunities for them to observe teaching and to evaluate its impact on pupils' learning in their subjects.
- Improve the range of resources and activities available in the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The quality of learning in lessons and work in pupils' books confirms pupils are making good progress across the school from starting points generally in line with expectations. In one good literacy lesson, where pupils were writing a description of a character from their history lesson, the teacher encouraged very high levels of motivation by her energy, enthusiasm and good use of humour. A good pace was set and maintained throughout and tasks were closely matched to pupils' abilities so that all made good progress. This good practice of writing in specific genres in different subjects is not consistent, however. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good support provided by class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies. Their individual education plans are child-friendly and appropriate. This helps these pupils to learn successfully.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and Year 4 pupils stated that they will be sorry to leave the school in the summer. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation and are confident that issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. Their good behaviour makes a strong contribution to their good progress in lessons. They behave considerately towards each other and respond quickly to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves. Pupils are interested in the school's health promotion strategies and understand the main threats to their health and how these can be avoided. Through the school council pupils demonstrate their pride in their school community and take their responsibilities very seriously. Coupled with their well-developed basic skills, this prepares them well for the world of work.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <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> |

## How effective is the provision?

Strategies for managing the behaviour of pupils are very effective so that lessons are calm and purposeful, and pupils work hard. In most lessons, carefully targeted questioning draws out pupils' ideas and develops their thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers assess learning carefully and provide work at the right level to match pupils' different ages and learning needs in the mixed-age classes. Pupils who need extra help are supported well and those who find learning easy are given more challenging tasks. This helps all pupils to learn successfully. However, in a small number of lessons, the pace of the lesson, after a good start, was insufficiently brisk, leading to some loss of focus. Support by teaching assistants is well focused and, in the best cases, makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Staff work together well to ensure that pupils know how to improve. Clear targets are set to help them reach higher standards of work.

The school provides a good curriculum which meets pupils' different needs and interests successfully. Carefully adapted activities ensure that all groups of pupils in the mixed-age classes experience success and staff are beginning to link subjects to make learning more meaningful. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of visits and visitors, which are much enjoyed by pupils. Collaboration with other schools and extended services support the development of the wider curriculum well. The school's outstanding arrangements for the care of all pupils contribute to their very good development and well-being and support their learning very well. Staff know and care deeply for all pupils and provide rigorous safeguarding and welfare procedures to help ensure their safety, including the safety of those pupils facing difficult situations. This gives them the confidence to learn and enables pupils new to

<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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the school or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same good progress as others.

*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>1</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has consistently communicated to the staff his high expectations about continuing to improve provision. The result of this is clearly evident in the significant improvements made. With the able support of an enthusiastic, committed and well-motivated staff team he has identified, and has rigorously and successfully tackled, areas requiring improvement. Staff work very effectively together and regularly take advantage of professional opportunities to enhance their work. As a result of regular monitoring and support by the headteacher and local authority advisors, teaching is good across the school and planning is founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data. The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school and fully and systematically involved in evaluating its work. They discharge their duties effectively. School leaders and members of the governing body have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and have good systems to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. The school adopts recommended good practice for safeguarding pupils across all areas of its work and is rigorous in ensuring that checks are frequently carried out.

The school has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. This effective liaison with parents, carers and with other partners contributes significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being. The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement. It is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. The school promotes community cohesion within its own and the local community very well and has a good understanding of its local context. It is also actively developing links with other schools in the United Kingdom and France. The school makes good use of all its resources and provides good value for money.

*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        |

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|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <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>1</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

Provision for the youngest children is good. School data from previous intakes demonstrate clearly that children make good progress in their first year in school. Reception children clearly enjoy school. They have settled into the routines well and play happily together or on their own, delighting in learning and seeing new things. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are effective. Consequently, children are safe, well cared for and aware of how to be healthy. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly, supported well and integrated effectively into all activities. Staff have good relationships with parents and carers through daily contact at the start and end of each day. Children undertake a variety of whole class and group activities indoors and out. Provision for the outdoor curriculum is satisfactory. The classroom has free access to a newly remodelled and spacious, secure outdoor area with a large covered area that allows the outdoor curriculum to continue in inclement weather. However, the range of resources and activities available in the outdoor area is currently limited.

There are good systems for the long-term assessment and tracking of children's progress. All staff are involved in monitoring and recording children's progress on a day-to-day basis and this information is used well to plan work carefully to match children's needs and enhance their rates of progress. Leadership is good and self-evaluation secure. Adults have a good knowledge of the learning, development and welfare requirements, and the guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*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        |



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## Views of parents and carers

A much higher proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than in similar schools nationally. Parents and carers are extremely well satisfied with the school, reflecting the school's excellent links with them. All who responded felt that their child enjoys school and all believe the school keeps their child safe and healthy, informs them about their child's progress and takes account of their suggestions and concerns. All parents and carers feel that teaching is good, and that the school is well led and managed and all declare themselves, overall, happy with their child's experience at the school. Only one parent or carer disagreed with any of the statements and felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. No details were given. The inspection found that standards of behaviour are good across the school, and occasionally excellent, and the quality of behaviour has a significant positive effect on the good progress pupils make.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Leonard's CofE (A) First 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 inspector received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 39 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 25             | 86 | 4     | 14 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 27             | 93 | 2     | 7  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 23             | 79 | 6     | 21 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 23             | 79 | 6     | 21 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 28             | 97 | 1     | 3  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 25             | 86 | 3     | 10 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 28             | 97 | 1     | 3  | 0        | 0 | 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) | 20             | 69 | 5     | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 27             | 93 | 2     | 7  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 20             | 69 | 7     | 24 | 1        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 21             | 72 | 8     | 28 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 24             | 83 | 5     | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 26             | 90 | 3     | 10 | 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.**



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Leonard's CofE (A) First School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2LY**

Thank you so much for helping me when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed meeting so many of you and observing you at work and at play. You made me feel very welcome and made my short visit very enjoyable. Together with your parents and carers, you think St. Leonard's is a good school and I agree with you. You clearly enjoy learning and taking part enthusiastically in the interesting and challenging activities the curriculum offers you. You make good progress and achieve above average standards. Your behaviour is good and I was very impressed with your good manners. You have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and you feel safe and cared for in school. It was good to hear from the school councillors about how you are helping to improve the school. You told us that you greatly enjoy school and are proud to attend, and your above average level of attendance confirms this. Teachers work hard to help you to learn and to make sure you enjoy being at school. All the adults take excellent care of you. Your school is well led and managed and is continually improving.

To help you to make even better progress, we have asked the school to:

- give teachers in charge of subjects opportunities to observe lessons so that they can find ways of making teaching and learning even better
- give you more chances to use your writing skills in other subjects and genres
- make the outdoor area more exciting for the youngest children.

You can all help by always doing your best.

Thank you again for making me so welcome. I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis  
Lead inspector

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