

Leigh St Peter's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135841
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	381933
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2012
Lead inspector	Kevin Johnson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Greensmith
Headteacher	Pat Jolley
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson

Peter Martin

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Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 16 teachers, talked to pupils and reviewed some of their work. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body as well as some parents and carers. Also taken into account were 247 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those completed by pupils and members of staff. Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation which included that relating to safeguarding, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings, national assessment data and the school's assessments.

Information about the school

This larger than average-sized primary school opened in September 2010 following the closure of separate infant and junior schools. The school operates on a split site. The majority of pupils are White British. Almost half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or with a statement of special education needs is above the national average.

A daily breakfast/reading club is provided at the junior school site. Recent school achievements include the Eco School award and the first stage of the International School Award. The school meets current floor standards which are the minimum government expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

There has been considerable disruption to staffing over the past year.

The headteacher of the former junior school took over the leadership of the current school when it opened.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils' good achievement is underpinned by the exceptional quality of care which the school provides for their well-being. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength, as is the leadership of the school. It is not yet outstanding because attainment in English needs to be higher, and although teaching is good it could be improved further to outstanding.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a positive start. When they start in the Nursery, their skills are very low in relation to expectations for their age in all areas of learning. They make sound progress and most work within expected levels by the end of Reception, though they do not achieve typical levels for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Mathematics has improved well owing to the school focus on that subject but standards in English, although improving, are not high enough throughout the school. Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. This represents good achievement from pupils' earlier starting points.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding, but there are inconsistencies which result in a small amount of satisfactory learning. Most lessons are lively, and enjoyed by pupils.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They share trusting relationships with each other and adults who work in the school. Consequently, they feel safe and enjoy school life. Attendance is above average.
- School leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness and demonstrate good capacity to bring about its continued success. The management of teaching is robust and well focused on improvement. Teachers' performance is supported effectively through a planned programme of monitoring observations by senior leaders and well-targeted training. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in English throughout the school and raise attainment further by:
 - embedding the systematic teaching of phonics already begun in Key Stage 1 and extending it into Key stage 2
 - taking steps to improve pupils' spelling and their handwriting
 - ensure that writing skills are promoted well across all subjects.
- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:
 - providing sufficient challenge for all pupils in all lessons
 - making sure that assessment, especially in Nursery, always drives the next steps in learning and that criteria for success in all lessons are linked to what pupils should learn.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils learn well in lessons because they are attentive and keen to do well. They particularly enjoy practical work and talk enthusiastically about the challenges provided by some of the mathematical games that enliven lessons as well as practical activities in art or science, for example. Pupils know their targets and what to do to achieve them and are increasingly involved in assessing their own work and measuring their progress. Through their 'Sparkle' lessons they have good opportunities to apply and develop skills, including information and communication technology but the range of writing pupils do, which is linked to different subjects, is limited and is not always presented neatly enough.

Progress for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is stronger in Reception than in Nursery. This is because assessment is more focused in the Reception classes and used better to inform children's learning and development of skills. In both classes, there is a strong focus on developing children's personal skills, particularly their readiness to learn, and there is particularly good progress to be seen in this area of their development.

Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. This represents good achievement given pupils' starting points. Progress is good as pupils move through the school. Nevertheless, there is ground to make up. Despite pockets of outstanding progress, as more effective use of assessment and stronger teaching takes effect, standards in English across the whole school are not high enough.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with a statement of special educational needs also make good, and at times, outstanding progress. A raft of very well-planned support for pupils' learning, delivered sensitively by skilled staff members, ensures that all pupils' particular needs are met at an early stage. A measure of success is the reduced number of pupils in need of additional support higher up the school. The gap between the attainment in mathematics of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others at the end of Year 6 has been successfully dealt with by the school. This is a result of specially formed groups where good teaching has boosted pupils' mathematical skills.

Most parents and carers feel that their children's needs are met and that they make good progress. Pupils say that they are confident about their learning and feel that their progress is good.

Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence of improvement as systems for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) take hold. Pupils, including those in Year 1, tackle reading confidently using their knowledge of phonics to sound out and read unfamiliar words. All read regularly to an adult in school or at home. By the end of Year 6, reading skills are broadly average. Pupils say that they read more than they used to and many do extra reading and change books while attending the breakfast club. However, the lack of systematic phonics teaching has led to weaknesses in spelling which in turn limits attainment in English.

Quality of teaching

Lessons are planned well and take good account of pupils' varying abilities. In most lessons, the pace of learning is good because pupils are clear about what is expected of them and they rise to the challenges of new learning. Teachers provide good resources to help pupils learn in practical sessions and use electronic whiteboards effectively to demonstrate new ideas. This often promotes good thinking and discussion which help to keep pupils on their toes. Relationships in lessons are never less than good and pupils willingly work together and appreciate contributions that others' make to lessons. In two outstanding lessons, teachers used assessment particularly well throughout the whole lesson. Questions were carefully pitched so that pupils of all abilities could contribute. There was continuous checking of pupils' understanding as they worked and next steps were quickly identified when pupils were ready to move on so that no pupil marked time. Combined with teachers' excellent management of pupils and very high expectations, the result was excellent learning. Occasionally, assessment is not used well enough as a starting point for new learning and results in pupils being under challenged. This was exemplified by a pupil's comment after a lesson that it was, 'a nice lesson but too easy'. Sometimes the steps to successful learning in lessons are not clearly spelled out making it difficult for teachers and pupils to check the progress made.

Teaching assistants and other support staff work well alongside class teachers and provide good support for pupils. Their dedication and example are significant factors in helping pupils to develop good relationships and to learn well. The planning and organisation of lessons take full account of pupils' social and moral development. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in lessons, in small groups and individually, at times. Their learning is carefully planned and targets are presented to them in a way that they understand. This helps them to be clear about what they need to do and enables them to measure their own success.

The strong school focus on the teaching of reading is having a good impact not only on reading ability but on attitudes to reading as well. Pupils are encouraged by the 'Reading Olympics' scheme introduced by the school which sets targets for them. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the range of authors they know and of the kinds of books they like to read.

Parents and carers hold the view that their children are taught well, as do the vast majority of pupils. This view is well supported by inspection evidence.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are polite and well mannered around the school. They are courteous to one another and show respect towards adults. Above-average attendance is an indication of their positive attitudes and enjoyment of school. Their enthusiasm for tasks such as serving on the school council or being eco-club members, who are watchful over the use of water and energy, contributes much to the life of the school and fosters justifiable pride in what they do. Pupils judge their own behaviour to be good but some parents and carers express concerns. Inspectors found pupils to be well behaved, that records support the view that this is usual and that systems for managing pupils' behaviour are effective. Pupils have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. They understand that bullying can take on many forms and speak strongly against it, as well as racist behaviour. They are adamant that neither occurs in school and confident that they would be dealt with quickly if they did.

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires agree overwhelmingly that their children are safe in school. This view is consistent with that of the pupils themselves. Pupils have sensible views about the kind of lifestyles they should adopt and are aware of potential dangers they might face outside of school, including those linked to internet use and cyber-bullying.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has been a significant driving force in school improvement since the school opened. Aply supported by a strong leadership team and governing body she has moulded a cohesive, hard-working team whose corporate aim is to raise standards and quality of provision throughout the school. High-quality training for teachers has been a main priority. In achieving the current good quality, leaders have overcome setbacks in staffing through robust monitoring and support, sharing the best practice and measuring progress against clear performance targets. Effective systems have increased the accuracy of teachers' assessments. As a result of these actions, the school's capacity to improve further has increased.

The curriculum provides for pupils' needs well and enables them to develop a good range of skills and interests, but planning for writing does not make the best of all opportunities across subjects. Pupils' enjoyment of learning and their personal qualities are enhanced by an engaging range of activities which supports good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The governing body provides good support for the school particularly in promoting equality of opportunity and opposing discrimination. It is aware of the potential vulnerability of some groups of pupils and holds the school to account for their progress and well-being. Safeguarding measures are firmly in place and fully meet requirements. They are checked regularly to ensure their continued effectiveness.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leigh St Peter's CE Primary School, Leigh, WN7 4TP

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome that you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We were impressed by your courtesy and good manners and it was a pleasure to talk to you about your school. Well done also on your above-average attendance. Do keep that up because it is very important if you are to make the most of your opportunities in school.

St Peter's is a good school. You make good progress and the standards you reach in English and mathematics are improving. Nevertheless, standards in English across the whole school need to be higher. You told us that you enjoy lessons and we found that teachers work hard to make lessons fun, so that you learn well. Your headteacher and other school leaders manage the school well and help it to improve.

I know that your teachers, parents and carers, the governing body and you would like St Peter's to be improved further. To help that to happen we have asked the teachers to do two things. The first is to improve your standards in English by helping you to spell more accurately and write more neatly. Also, by making sure that you get lots of opportunities to write about all the different subjects you study. The second thing is to make all lessons as good as the very best. We have asked teachers to make sure the work they give you is never too easy and that you always know what you have to do in lessons to achieve your best.

You can help by continuing to work hard and help one another and by being as well behaved in the future as you are now.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson
Lead inspector

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