

Leigh Primary School

Walker Lane, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 5PL

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Progress, although improving, varies between different classes and subjects, because the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough. Too few of them reach levels above those expected for their age at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not improving quickly enough. Strong leadership is not yet established. Activities outdoors do not provide children with opportunities to develop skills in all areas of learning.
- Assessment is not always used well enough to make sure that work is at the right level for different pupils. Pupils' targets are not always used to pinpoint exactly what they need to do next.
- The school's systems to check on pupils' attainment and progress are not yet used consistently well across the school.
- Procedures to set targets for all staff are not yet rigorous enough to hold them more fully to account for pupils' performance.
- The role of middle leaders in checking on teaching and learning is not yet fully developed.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel happy and safe in school. They behave well, have good attitudes to learning and are keen to 'Reach for the Stars', as the school motto says.
- Senior leaders are determined and ambitious for the school and its pupils. Actions taken have led to improvements in teaching and achievement since the last inspection. Parents acknowledge how much the school has improved.
- The school provides many rich and varied activities that help pupils develop their understanding of the world around them.
- Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school. They know what still needs to be done. They ask challenging questions and are therefore helping to drive ongoing improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons, including two observations carried out jointly with senior leaders. The inspectors also observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work to gain a view of teaching over time. They observed and talked to pupils at lunchtime and during their break times.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, parents, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 27 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own survey of parents' views and 29 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress and attainment across the school, the school's own view of its own effectiveness, and how the school checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Yvonne Mills-Clare

Additional Inspector

Tony Price

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Over half of all pupils speak English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast club is provided by the school.
- There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement further, by:
 - making better use of information on pupils' progress, in order to make sure that work is at the right level for different pupils
 - giving the most able pupils more challenging work and explaining to them exactly what they need to do to move to higher levels
 - making better use of pupils' targets, including when marking their work, to pinpoint what they need to do next
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to respond to written feedback on how to make their work better.
- Improve achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - establishing strong leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - observing and assessing carefully what children can do in order to plan their next steps
 - planning jointly across the Nursery and Reception classes to make sure that activities always move children's learning forward and that they do not repeat things that they already know
 - making better use of outdoor activities to develop children's skills in all areas of learning
 - giving staff opportunities to observe good and outstanding practice in other settings.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management further, by:
 - developing consistency in using the school's new tracking systems for checking on the attainment and progress of pupils
 - establishing more rigorous procedures for setting clear and precise targets for all staff, so that they can be held more fully to account for the performance of pupils
 - developing the role of middle leaders through increasing their skills and involvement in checking on teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although progress is improving, and current school data show that many pupils across the school are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, there are still variations between progress in different classes and subjects. There is a legacy of underachievement, which the school recognises has yet to be fully overcome.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those typical for their age, and well below in key areas of language. Most of them make expected progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, but do not make fast enough progress to lay firm foundations for their future learning. Leadership is not yet as strong as it needs to be. Assessment and planning do not consistently ensure that children build on what they already know and can do.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been rising over the past three years. However, this year they have dipped, particularly in writing, due to pupils' low starting points when they entered Year 2.
- Achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 dipped in 2013. Well-below-average proportions of pupils made enough progress. Too few reached the levels expected for their age. However, current school data, confirmed by evidence gathered during the inspection, show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels this year at the end of Year 6 is set to be close to national averages. The school predicts that it will meet the government floor standards. However, while more pupils have now made adequate progress, the proportion doing better than this is still predicted to be below average.
- At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, too few pupils reach levels above those expected for their age. The most able pupils are not given work that challenges and stretches them. They do not always receive specific guidance on how to reach higher levels, for example through using more varied vocabulary and complex sentence structure when writing. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is now taught much more effectively. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well below average in 2013, but this year, it is above average. The school makes sure that pupils understand what they read. Pupils in Year 6 read fluently and expressively.
- Pupils mostly make steady progress in other subjects and apply their writing skills effectively in their work in science and history. The artist in residence helps pupils to do particularly well in art. The corridors are bright with pupils' drawings and collages.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are now identified sooner. There is a broader range of special programmes to meet different needs. Teaching assistants have developed their skills to deliver these, as well as providing additional support in the classroom. These pupils, therefore, now make better progress than previously.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language mostly achieve well. Bilingual support at an early stage helps them to develop the language skills that they need.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to other pupils. Where gaps are identified, the funding is used well to provide additional learning support. It is also used to ensure that all pupils have access to all aspects of school life, such as school visits. This demonstrates the school's commitment to giving every pupil equality of opportunity. Gaps between the attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of other pupils narrowed in 2013. They were approximately two terms ahead in reading, about six months behind in writing and a term behind in mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While teaching is improving and more of it is now good, it is not yet consistently good enough over time to make sure that pupils in all classes make good progress.
- Checks on pupils' progress are not always used well enough to make sure that work is at the right level for different pupils. The most able pupils, in particular, are often not given work that

is sufficiently challenging, nor do they have specific guidance to show them exactly what they need to do to reach higher levels.

- Although pupils have target sheets, they do not refer to these on a regular basis to pinpoint exactly what they need to do next. Pupils' books show that they do not have regular opportunities to respond to written feedback in order to improve their work.
- Outdoor activities are too limited in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This acts as a brake on the progress that children make in all areas of learning.
- 'Hooks for learning', such as video clips, are used consistently well to engage pupils' attention quickly and stimulate their interest. Pupils are consequently eager to learn and to do their best. In most lessons, they move quickly between activities. Time is not wasted and learning is not interrupted.
- Teachers do not always question pupils effectively enough, but when they do pupils extend their thinking well and gain confidence to explain their ideas fully. For example, pupils in Year 6 discussed animatedly what they could deduce about a character's personality after reading about what he said and did.
- Pupils say that they know what is expected of them and that this helps them to make progress. They assess what they have done and see if it matches the 'success criteria' that they have been given. Their work shows that they regularly highlight what they have done well. Pupils in Year 5 were thoroughly engrossed during 'proof-reading time' and several made amendments in order to improve their work before giving it to the teacher to mark.
- Good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is improving pupils' progress. Teaching assistants have received additional training and deliver well-tailored support programmes for particular pupils. They also work alongside different groups of pupils in lessons. They guide them effectively, but most are careful not to make pupils over-reliant on them, so that they develop independent learning skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils contribute to pupils' willingness to learn. They have good attitudes to learning and want to do their best. They usually concentrate well in lessons and work hard. However, they lose interest and their behaviour slips somewhat when they are not sufficiently challenged in lessons.
- Pupils of different backgrounds get on well together both when learning and playing. They are thoughtful of one another as they move around the school. They follow well-established routines such as staying on the left-hand side on the stairs and holding doors open. They understand the school code of conduct, and learn to take responsibility for their actions. Pupils say that behaviour has 'improved a lot'.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy taking on additional responsibilities. Year 6 play leaders, who receive training from an experienced sports coach to carry out their role, are appreciated by other pupils. They say how much they help by organising games, making sure that no one is left out and ensuring that everyone gets a fair turn on the big equipment.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel absolutely safe in school, and parents agree that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils also show a good understanding of how to stay safe in other situations, particularly when using the internet.
- Some parents expressed concerns about bullying. The inspectors followed this up and found that, when incidents come to light, as happened very recently, they are dealt with speedily and effectively. The school has a 'zero tolerance' policy on bullying and goes to considerable lengths to prevent it from happening. Pupils themselves, both in formal and informal discussions, said that bullying is extremely rare. They know that they must tell an adult if they are upset and are confident that issues will be sorted out quickly.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Actions taken by senior leaders, while leading to some improvements, have not yet had sufficient impact on the overall quality of teaching and achievement. Changes to staffing have meant that it has been difficult to achieve stability and consistency across the school.
- New tracking systems for checking on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils are not used consistently and confidently by all teachers. Procedures to set targets for all staff are not yet rigorous enough, and targets set are not always sufficiently clear and precise. This means that leaders are not able to hold staff fully to account for the pupils' performance.
- The school has recently appointed a new team of middle leaders. While their skills are developing quickly, they do not yet have an established role in checking on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has a clear view of what still needs to be done to improve the school. They, and the governing body, are determined that the school will continue to move forward, in order to do the best for all pupils.
- Senior leaders carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching. They provide strong support and guidance for teachers where necessary, and have taken decisive action to eliminate weak teaching. They acknowledge that there is, however, still much to do to ensure that teaching is consistently good over time.
- Most parents are supportive of the school and feel that their children are doing well. They appreciate the 'open door' policy and regular opportunities to talk with teachers after school. They feel that the school has improved since the last inspection.
- The curriculum focuses appropriately on developing pupils' basic skills. Pupils talked eagerly to the inspectors about the wide range of additional experiences they have. Clubs such as cheerleading are popular. They found the visit by Zulu dancers 'amazing'. Older pupils are excited about the film-making project that they are undertaking. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school makes good use of the primary school sport funding. An experienced and well-qualified sports coach works regularly with all classes, to develop pupils' skills in different sports and to build up teams to participate in local tournaments. Teachers are involved in these lessons to improve their own skills in teaching physical education.
- The local authority has only been able to offer light-touch support for the school since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the school, because they meet regularly with senior and middle leaders. They keep a close eye on what is being done to improve the school. They have a good understanding of pupils' progress data and are not afraid to ask challenging questions, such as why last year's phonics results were low. They understand the strengths of the school, but they also know how much still needs to be done to improve the consistency of teaching and raise standards further. They have supported senior leaders in making difficult decisions to tackle underperformance in teaching. They have a firm grasp on finances and make sure that decisions relating to teachers' pay progression depend on their targets being met. They are fully committed to making sure that everyone is treated equally and check that the pupil premium funding is spent wisely. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106225
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	430601

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	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Shawdale
Headteacher	Janet Haseldine
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2012
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