

# St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Overthorpe Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 4SB

**Inspection dates** 8–9 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always plan lessons that are effective in meeting pupils' differing needs.
- Pupils' progress in writing is held back because there are too few opportunities to write at length or develop their writing skills in other subjects.
- The most able pupils are not always given work that challenges them sufficiently to achieve the highest levels.
- Feedback to pupils from marking does not always help them to improve their work.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Leaders have had too little impact on improving teaching.
- Middle leaders have had too little impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- Governors do not check the achievement of groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, closely enough.
- Governors have a limited understanding of the links between teachers' pay and performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children settle well and get off to a good start.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) have ensured more pupils are meeting the standard expected at the end of Year 1.
- Pupils are now making better progress and reaching higher standards, especially by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Sport funding is used well to develop pupils' swimming skills.
- Pupils say, and their parents agree, that they feel safe and well cared for in school. The pastoral support which vulnerable pupils receive is a strength.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered towards each other and adults. They behave well around school.
- Enrichment activities provided by the school broaden pupils' learning and add to their enjoyment.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed an assembly, heard pupils reading and discussed their reading progress with them. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, other staff with significant responsibilities, two representatives of the governing body and a representative from Oxfordshire local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 31 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents, and responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors also considered the 41 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, teachers' planning, records showing leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to keeping pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Diana Travis

Additional Inspector

Fiona Bridger-Wilkinson

Seconded Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Leonard's Church of England Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The school has a Nursery class.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support pupils who are known to be, or have been, eligible for free school meals and those cared for by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Approximately half of pupils are White British. The other half are from diverse ethnic backgrounds, with the largest proportion from Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or who have education, health and care plans is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan sufficiently challenging work in all subjects for all pupils, including the most able
  - teachers' marking and feedback show pupils how to improve their work
  - pupils have regular opportunities to write at length and put into practice the skills they are developing.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership by:
  - ensuring plans for improvement include measures for success, so that leaders can more readily check on the rate of improvement
  - developing the skills of middle leaders more fully so they evaluate effectively the impact of their actions on improving pupils' progress
  - monitoring and evaluating the impact of pupil premium funding on raising pupils' attainment.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by ensuring all governors fully understand pupil progress information so they can check on pupil performance and hold leaders to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Even though there has been some improvement, particularly in phonics, leadership and management are not yet good because teaching is not yet consistently good. Pupils' progress is inconsistent between classes.
- Leaders are unclear if outcomes for particular groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are improving. Clear plans for improvement are in place but leaders have not thought carefully enough about how they will measure the success they are having in overcoming weaknesses.
- The headteachers make regular checks on the quality of teaching. However, checks do not focus on the impact teaching makes on the achievement of different groups. This means that the senior leaders and the governing body do not always have an accurate view of the quality of teaching in order to hold teachers and subject leaders to account for its weaknesses.
- Teaching is not improving quickly enough. Performance management targets for teachers are not always helpful as they do not link closely enough to the National Teaching Standards or to improving achievement for pupils in their class.
- Leaders have established a clear plan for spending pupil premium funding which includes running a summer school for the lowest attaining pupils. Leaders track the progress of eligible pupils carefully. However, leaders acknowledge that they have not maintained a sharp enough oversight of the effectiveness of support on improving attainment. For example, in 2013, disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1 were approximately one year behind their peers. Leaders have not checked to see if this gap has narrowed.
- The headteachers are rightly proud of the inclusive nature of the school. Pupils feel proud to be members of the school community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is their understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils are very respectful towards each other.
- Regular opportunities are provided to broaden pupils' experiences. The school makes good use of specialist teachers to enhance the curriculum. For example, in an African drumming lesson with a specialist teacher, pupils quickly swiftly developed their understanding of pitch and rhythm.
- The school is making good use of the primary sport funding. A number of initiatives have been successful in raising attainment, particularly in swimming. More pupils at the end of Year 6 can now swim 25 metres. There is increased participation in sport, including inter-school events such as the recent cross-country competition; this contributes effectively to pupils' well-being
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. A particular strength is the very effective work of the home-school liaison worker who ensures outside agencies are used well to support more vulnerable families and pupils. As a result, attendance has improved for these pupils.
- Leaders continue to strengthen engagement with families and the wider community. They successfully promote partnerships with families, through holding regular family events such as the popular 'bushcraft' weekend. Similarly, the school regularly joins community events. For example, pupils participate in 'Children Singing for Children', an event in the parish church in partnership with the Rotary Club of Banbury.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive. All who completed the online questionnaire would recommend the school to other parents. Equality of opportunity is promoted well in relation to eliminating any form of discrimination, including the use of racist language.
- A local authority adviser recently conducted a useful review of the school. The local authority has a clear and accurate understanding of those aspects that are improving or need to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are supportive and are regularly involved in school activities such as hearing pupils read. Governors have undertaken some monitoring activity for themselves, including a visit to evaluate the provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. This visit was useful to school leaders. Governors have also made some visits to classes with the headteachers. Despite this, they have a limited understanding of the link between teachers' targets and pay. They are more involved in setting targets for the management of the headteachers' performance.
  - Governors receive detailed information about how well pupils are achieving. However, governors do not always understand the data about pupils' achievement in sufficient detail to be able to ask challenging questions.
  - Governors monitor the school's finances effectively. However, although they know how the school spends pupil premium funding, they are less sure of the impact this has on narrowing the attainment gap between eligible pupils and their classmates. A review of governance and use of pupil premium is

recommended to enable governors to be more effective in supporting and checking the key priorities of teaching and pupils' achievement.

- The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils play well together. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being sports leaders and helpfully organise games for younger pupils at lunchtime. As a result, pupils arrive for afternoon lessons calm, happy and ready to learn.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school; adults give appropriate support and encouragement to pupils. The school has a welcoming atmosphere, where pupils are polite and courteous, getting on well with one another and showing respect to adults.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they have; pupils are encouraged to apply for positions of responsibility in Year 6 and are proud when their application is successful. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils manned the reception area at lunchtime and were well versed in how to answer the telephone politely or welcome visitors affably.
- In lessons, pupils respond promptly to adults and are keen to learn. However, when tasks do not interest them sufficiently, usually because they are not challenging enough, social chitchat can takeover.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and it is currently in line with the national average. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school.
- Detailed, up to date records are kept of any incidents of poor behaviour and of the follow up actions taken.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Support for all pupils facing challenging circumstances is very effective.
- Serious incidents are rare. Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying and are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire all stated that their children were well cared for and kept safe in school.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and followed diligently.

## **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough has been good or better over time. Expectations are not high enough in some classes. As a result, progress is not consistently good, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Teachers do not always use information about what pupils already know in order to meet their differing needs accurately. For some pupils, the work they are given is occasionally too hard. For others, including the most able, it is too easy and does not extend their learning.
- The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is a consistently positive feature of lessons.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils do not support learning well enough. Although most teachers mark work conscientiously, they do not consistently indicate to pupils how to improve their work.
- The work in pupils' books shows very little evidence of pupils writing at length or applying their writing skills in other subjects. Work in topic books and science books is sparse or unfinished and pupils often complete the same tasks. Pupils are not improving the presentation of their work over time.
- Pupils make slower progress in mathematics than in other areas. This is because some teachers have weak subject knowledge. When this is the case, pupils become muddled and their progress is hindered.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations, good subject knowledge and check pupils' understanding regularly. In a phonics session in Reception, the teacher introduced a new sound and checked children's understanding effectively. As a result, children applied their phonic skills well and were able to use the new sound accurately to sound out new words.
- When teaching assistants are deployed effectively they are a valuable help to pupils, including those with special educational needs. They work well with small groups, using probing questioning to develop pupils' understanding. However, in some lessons, particularly mathematics, these opportunities are not planned

well. When this is the case, pupils are not as well supported and their progress slows.

- Homework is set regularly and routinely marked. Pupils enjoy regular opportunities to practise their basic skills, including learning multiplication facts or new spelling patterns.
- Checks made by the local authority confirm that teachers' assessment judgements are reliable in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, checks have not been rigorous in other year groups and leaders agree that some judgements may be inaccurate.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- More able pupils do not make good progress. Too few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 in writing and mathematics.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is improving, particularly in writing and mathematics. However, too few pupils attain the highest levels, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics has declined. The progress pupils make varies according to how good the teaching is and whether pupils are getting the right additional support when they need it. Standards are better in reading and writing; this is because intervention work, in reading and writing, provides helpful support to pupils.
- Pupils, for whom the school received pupil premium funding, make similar progress to their peers. In 2014 pupils in Year 6 achieved as well as their classmates.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because well-tailored support is effective at helping these pupils improve their skills, particularly in reading and writing.
- Reading is not given a high enough priority throughout the school. There are too few opportunities for pupils to read a wider variety of literature and develop their enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups do not always achieve as well as other pupils, particularly in writing. This is because not all teachers know how to help them achieve well in every lesson.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is improving. The outcome of the phonic screening check for pupils in Year 1 in 2014 was broadly average. Those pupils who re-took the check in Year 2 also showed improved results.
- Children enter the Nursery class with knowledge, skills and understanding lower than those typical for their age. Provision in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that many children make good progress. As they move to Year 1, their skills are much closer to those of children of the same age nationally.

### The early years provision

### is good

- Children enter the Nursery class with skills in language and communication and personal and social development which are lower than those typical for their age. They learn in a calm and safe environment, where all adults share high expectations of them.
- More children than in the past, including those with disabilities and special educational needs and those for whom the school receives additional funding, make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve a good level of development. More children are well prepared for Year 1 than in the past.
- The use of additional assistants, including bilingual staff, is particularly effective in the Nursery. Children, including those with English as an additional language, enjoy hearing and sharing stories in the 'rainbow corner'. Teachers and teaching assistants are careful to focus on the development of children's language, speaking and listening skills, enabling children to make good progress.
- Adults plan for all aspects of children's learning, including learning outdoors. Their teaching ensures that children receive a balanced programme of activities containing those directed by adults and others which children choose for themselves.
- Engagement with parents is a strong feature of the provision. The 'Little Crackers' noticeboard gives parents an opportunity to make useful contributions to their child's learning, sharing valuable information.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved since the previous inspection. All staff are well trained and have a good understanding of how children learn; they are skilled at assessing children's progress in different areas of learning.
- Children are well cared for and safeguarding procedures meet 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123179
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448850

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 - 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	437
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Derek Johns
<b>Headteachers</b>	Mrs Sally Godden and Mrs Lesley Alcorn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01295 26507
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