

# St Leonard's (CofE) Primary School (VC)

St Leonard's Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NQ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress from starting points below those typically found. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above national averages.
- All groups of pupils make equally good progress. For example, differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of others are minimal.
- The quality of teaching is consistently high. Work is planned well to challenge the most able, and the quality of help given when pupils' progress slows is excellent.
- Pupils' behaviour is of a very high standard. They work hard in lessons and play safely at other times. They report that bullying is very rare and say that they are confident to discuss their concerns with adults.
- Pupils are kept safe through rigorous and effective procedures. For example, staff have a very good understanding of pupils' individual medical needs.
- Leaders and managers have brought about excellent improvement since the previous inspection. A long-term plan to improve the quality of teaching has been especially successful.
- Leaders at all levels are highly effective. The morale of staff is very high. Rightly, they believe that all the actions taken by senior leaders are to enable pupils to succeed.
- The curriculum is a major strength. Pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain. They understand, at their own level, the nature of democracy and the dangers of extremism.
- The governing body has a very good understanding of the school's many strengths and few weaknesses. Governors use their personal expertise particularly well to challenge senior staff and to support the school.
- The early years provision is exceptionally well led. Children make excellent progress in Reception and are very well prepared to start Year 1.
- Some information on the school website is hard to find. A small minority of parents report that expectations of pupils' homework are not always clear.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons. In addition, they paid visits to activities involving more than one class, such as when children in early years were learning outdoors. The majority of these observations, and some other inspection activities, were carried out jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' written work in order to analyse their achievement over a period of time, and evaluating the quality of teachers' marking. They also listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors reviewed school documents, including those relating to pupils' attainment and progress, their behaviour and safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of 102 parents who completed the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire were analysed. A few parents submitted letters or were spoken to on the telephone at their request. All these views were taken into account. In addition, inspectors considered the views of the 50 staff who completed the inspection questionnaire. Of these staff, 12 are employed to work in the after-school club.

## Inspection team

Paul Sadler, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Hodson	Additional Inspector
Paul Willetts	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Following agreements with the local authority and other stakeholders, the number of pupils admitted in each school year has increased from 60 to 90. This happened in September 2013, so there are now 90 pupils in the Reception Year and in Year 1. New school buildings are being erected on an adjacent site and will open during the 2015/16 school year.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium is well below average. This provides funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The governors provide an after-school club that offers childcare. This is one of the largest such provisions in the area and is attended regularly by over 100 children.
- The early years provision within the school's Reception classes is full time.
- The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in October 2014.

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

- In order to ensure that parents and other interested parties are fully informed about the school's work, improve the website by:
  - ensuring that information is easy to locate
  - providing parents with clear guidance of pupils' homework requirements
  - updating information regularly, especially that which schools are required to provide.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher was appointed shortly after the last inspection. Supported by governors, senior leaders and other staff, she has created a climate in which learning flourishes. Pupils are challenged by exciting work and any need for additional support is quickly identified and met.
- School leaders have made excellent use of the latest research on effective teaching and of the school's links with teacher training bodies. This has enabled the quality of teaching to improve quickly over time, so that it is now consistently high. Teachers are excited by the wide range of professional development opportunities they are offered.
- Leadership responsibilities are delegated effectively to highly able senior and middle leaders. For example, the leadership of the early years provision is especially strong, as is the leadership of the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. There are similar examples elsewhere in the school.
- Teaching quality is checked accurately and regularly by senior leaders. Teachers value the resulting discussions, which acknowledge their strengths and identify areas for further development.
- The curriculum is outstanding and is continually being improved. Pupils are especially well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, Years 5 and 6 were well aware of the impending general election and had studied the referendum on Scottish independence. They were also well informed about the dangers of extremism, having discussed recent sad events occurring in Paris and elsewhere. This shows that the curriculum is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Additional funding is used very effectively. Disadvantaged pupils regularly attain standards that are higher than those of other pupils nationally, and there is little difference in their performance as compared with others in the school. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also achieve well. These facts demonstrate the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity.
- The additional funding for physical education and sport is used very well. Pupils have a wide range of physical activities to enjoy, including team sports and competitions with other schools. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyle choices.
- Pupils are prepared very well for secondary education. For example, discussions are planned where Year 6, especially those who were unsuccessful with their first choice of school, can share any concerns about their move to secondary school.
- The local authority provides appropriately light support. Its officers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and of the challenges presented by increasing the size of the school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. All adults are checked carefully and child protection arrangements are effective, with a suitable level of training for adults. This includes those employed for the after-school club. The arrangements as a whole are effective in keeping pupils safe.
- The after-school club is of very good quality. Children have a wide variety of well-supervised activities to interest them. At the club and during school time, older children are encouraged to care for those who are younger, showing the importance attached to fostering good relationships.
- Parents are positive about the school. Almost nine in 10 would recommend the school to others.
- School leaders acknowledge that there is room for improvement in the school's website. While all required information is included, some is difficult to locate. Some of the information is out-of-date. A small number of parents would also like clearer guidance on what pupils are expected to do for some homework activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are knowledgeable and effective. By analysing relevant data, they have a very good understanding of the school's performance when compared to others. They have high expectations of senior leaders and challenge them to improve. For example, senior leaders were challenged, successfully, to ensure that pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics matched the exceptionally high levels found in reading.
  - Governors have played an effective part in bringing about the very strong improvement seen since the school's previous inspection. In particular, governors make excellent use of their personal expertise, such as in teacher training, to benefit the school.
  - Governors have an excellent knowledge of the quality of teaching across the school. They understand the actions taken in the past to eliminate weaker teaching, and of how teachers' performance is linked to their pay and responsibilities.
  - Correctly, governors have played a central part in planning for the expansion in pupil numbers. They

check the impact of increasing numbers on staffing and resource issues, and the progress of the new buildings.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils show a love of learning and respond quickly to teachers' requests. They are confident when learning in a range of situations. They are polite and friendly in their dealings with other pupils and with adults.
- Once children on starting school are familiar with the school's very high expectations of their behaviour, it is consistently of a high standard in all classes, year groups and with different staff. No disruption, even at a low level, was seen in any of the lessons observed by inspectors.
- Pupils play together very well. Older pupils act as play leaders, organising games for younger pupils, or help them with their reading. They understand the importance of positive attitudes, for example towards those who may be less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and say that bullying is very rare, any that occurs being related usually to friendship issues. Pupils are confident that staff will sort such matters out, and are happy to approach staff with any concerns. Pupils say that unpleasant remarks, especially any with racist or homophobic overtones, would be challenged immediately. They could not, however, recall any such incidents. This demonstrates the school's success in tackling discrimination.
- Pupils' attendance is very high, well above national averages, showing that they enjoy school. Records show that over time school leaders have been very successful in improving overall attendance, and in reducing both persistent absence and fixed-term exclusions.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a very well-developed ability to assess risk, as appropriate for their age. For example, they have a very good understanding of the dangers of the misuse of electronic media.
- Pupils are well aware that bullying takes many forms and are taught well about how to avoid it occurring to themselves or others.
- Staff and governors undertake regular checks to ensure that all parts of the site are safe, and ensure that any issues identified are rectified promptly.
- While the current building works are separated from the school by a high safety fence, pupils have been briefed fully on the potential dangers. At an appropriate time, it is planned that small groups of supervised pupils should visit the site wearing the necessary safety equipment. They are looking forward to this opportunity.
- Children in early years are very well taught about how to learn and play outdoors in a safe manner. For example, they can explain that while throwing a small amount of water at someone might be playful, throwing a larger amount could be unpleasant and possibly dangerous.

## **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Evidence from pupils and their work shows that teachers plan tasks that challenge pupils to do their very best. This is the case in all classes and leads to excellent progress in every year.
- Teachers mark work and discuss it with their pupils, who value this feedback. Pupils often write their own comments on how they have done. Marking in mathematics especially is superb, enabling pupils to identify and correct misconceptions, and to move on to learn a higher-level skill.
- The teaching of reading is a further major strength. From Reception onwards, pupils learn to read quickly and accurately. Pupils who struggle, usually because they lack confidence, are supported extremely effectively by well-trained teachers and their assistants, so they catch up quickly.
- From an early age, pupils are encouraged to write at length. Examination of Year 2 pupils' writing showed very rapid progress in the development of writing skills during the current school year.
- The well-resourced school library enables pupils to select more challenging reading on topics that interest them. The librarian offers high-quality assistance when pupils make choices.
- Teachers use their very good knowledge of their pupils' disabilities or special educational needs to plan activities to meet their individual needs closely. They are also aware of those in their class who are disadvantaged, and deploy resources exceedingly well to ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Teachers' specialist skills, such as in art, music and physical education, are used very well. This adds

strength to the already diverse curriculum.

- Pupils are encouraged to use reading and other research techniques to undertake extensive homework. Pupils produce work of which they can be proud. Some parents, however, are not always certain of what is required.

### The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The attainment of pupils leaving Year 6 has improved steadily over the last four years. In 2014, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well above average when compared with schools nationally. There is good evidence in pupils' work and the school's checks on their progress that in 2015 there will be further improvement.
- Pupils make outstanding progress. Among Year 6 in 2014, all made at least the progress expected of them and the proportions making even better progress exceeded national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils make outstanding progress. In 2014, by the end of Year 2, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded that of other pupils nationally, and was in line with that of other pupils in the school.
- At the end of Year 6, there was a similar picture to the above in both reading and writing. In mathematics, there was a gap of about one term's work when disadvantaged pupils are compared with other pupils nationally and two terms when compared with other pupils in the school. This was recognised by school leaders. Records of pupils' progress and scrutiny of their work shows that current pupils are on track for these gaps to be eliminated in 2015.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. This is because of the high quality of the support they receive, and of careful planning to meet their needs.
- The most-able pupils make excellent progress. Among Year 6 leavers in 2014, while the number of most-able pupils was small, they made excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Current work by the most-able pupils shows high achievement, for example in Year 2 through an accurate understanding of the use of decimals.
- Pupils read widely and use their reading to broaden their understanding. Some in Years 5 and 6 made mature, sensible suggestions about the curriculum. For example, they would like to learn a wider range of modern foreign languages than the French which is currently available.
- Pupils develop very good skills needed to be successful in physical education. For example, Year 3 pupils were observed developing the catching and passing skills needed for basketball and lacrosse. Pupils also achieve very well in a range of creative subjects including art and music.

### The early years provision

is outstanding

- The curriculum for early years is planned exceptionally well. It ensures that all children make excellent progress in all aspects of their learning. As a result, their preparation to start more formal education in Year 1 is outstanding.
- Children start school with variable skills and knowledge, particularly in social and emotional development. Staff are quick to identify and plan for their individual needs. For example, any behavioural issues are tackled quickly so that children understand what is expected of them. As a result, behaviour quickly improves and is soon at the high standards expected of pupils throughout the school.
- Disadvantaged children make exceptionally good progress. Work was seen in which children had written shopping lists or described the life cycle of the frog. The quality of this work was high when compared with other children of their age.
- Similarly, those children who are disabled or with special educational needs make excellent progress. Staff are adept at providing just the right level of support they need.
- Teaching is excellent. The team of three teachers plan work together and use additional adults very well to support children. Children know the routines they are expected to follow and, as a result, little time is wasted. Children and parents receive very good feedback on their individual progress.
- Arrangements to keep children safe, for example, when learning outdoors, are highly effective.
- Leadership and management are excellent. The leader has very high aspirations for the children, uses the staff team very effectively and has planned well for the expansion of the provision. As a result, parents are warm in their praise and rightly have a high degree of confidence in the provision.

## 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>	134173
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	448606

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	455
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lucy Porter Goff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 666570
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