

Leigh Church of England Primary School

Plants Hill Crescent, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9RQ

Inspection dates 30 April –1 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leadership and management require improvement. Many staff and governor changes have slowed the pace of improvement until the start of this school year.
- The school has not been able to establish effective leadership in all subjects.
- Until recently the governing body has been unable to challenge school leaders effectively enough, although it has now been strengthened.
- Teachers do not always control behaviour in lessons well enough.
- Although better than it was, pupils' behaviour requires further improvement because a few of them are easily distracted in lessons and cause minor disruption to the learning of others.
- Not all pupils are punctual to school in the morning.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that pupils find challenging enough. This is because they do not use information from assessments consistently when planning lessons.
- Pupils' attainment, especially in reading, has been too low over time. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) are not as good as they should be.
- Although children settle into the Nursery happily, their learning does not move forward quickly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are taking successful and decisive action to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Pupils are making better progress in writing and mathematics throughout the school. Standards have risen in all years and more pupils are reaching above average levels, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils like coming to school and most have good attitudes to learning. They want to do well and are proud of their school. Staff keep them safe and look after them well.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 21 lessons or part lessons. 12 of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities and three governors. An inspector also spoke with the senior improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors discussed teaching and pupils' progress with class teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' books and records of their progress were examined.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading experiences.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. They also considered 34 written responses to the questionnaire, and spoke to parents informally.
- The inspectors considered the 23 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and development plans; an analysis of pupils' achievement and progress; safeguarding arrangements; and policies and records of checks made by leaders on the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marion Stewart-Smith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Children attend the newly opened Nursery in the mornings. Children in the Reception Year attend the school full time. There are six single-aged classes for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The school has extensive links to the Network 10 group of Coventry schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Child care is provided by the school in daily before- and after-school clubs.
- There have been a number of changes of teaching staff since the last inspection. The deputy headteacher joined the school at the start of this term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - set suitably challenging tasks for all pupils, especially in the Nursery
 - make good use of information from assessments when planning lessons
 - manage the behaviour of pupils more effectively.
- Raise the attainment, rate of improvement and pupils' enjoyment of reading by:
 - improving the teaching of links between letters and sounds (phonics) in order to develop pupils' reading skills more effectively
 - ensuring that all pupils have regular opportunities to develop their skills
 - developing a stronger home-school partnership in order to support pupils to improve their reading.
- Make leadership and management more effective by:
 - appointing and then training and enabling all new subject leaders to develop their skills as quickly as possible, so that they can play an increasing part in improving and sustaining pupils' progress and learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not good because pupils' attainment and achievement have been low for too long. For several years, leaders have not succeeded in ensuring that teaching is consistently good, partly because there have been so many changes in staff, including members of the leadership team.
- Subject leadership is still developing and is not yet having a good impact on teaching and achievement. However, new leaders are showing increasing confidence in seizing their responsibilities with skilled guidance from senior leaders.
- The headteacher has shown considerable resilience in trying to cope with a long period of staffing difficulties. She has been to the forefront in ensuring that there is now much greater stability in staffing, and encouraging and guiding new staff to help raise school performance. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and the achievement of pupils is now rising after several years of little progress.
- Present evidence indicates that the school has emerged positively from its difficulties and is improving its performance at an increasingly rapid rate. The headteacher and new deputy headteacher, who has settled in very quickly, are becoming a strong partnership as their skills complement each other. The senior leadership and improved governance are demonstrating a convincing capacity to move the school to a sustained improvement in performance.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior leaders is resulting in more effective and consistent teaching in most classes. This has led initially to an improvement in pupils' progress in writing and also now in mathematics. However, leadership is still striving to improve teaching sufficiently to raise the standards of pupils' reading.
- A growing strength of leadership is in its evaluation of the school's performance. This is enabling the school to have a clear picture of the road to further improvement, as leaders' analysis and priorities are both realistic and accurate.
- Improvement is apparent in several other areas. Assessment and procedures for tracking pupils' progress are much improved, although a few teachers are not yet confident in using new data. The governing body's involvement and knowledge of the school have been heightened by the arrival of new skilled and experienced governors.
- The new revised curriculum is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but leaders rightly believe that the introduction could be speedier.
- The new curriculum is being introduced with a clear focus on the multicultural nature of the school's pupils and families. For example, through assemblies the school is actively promoting tolerance and respect for others, including those with different faiths and beliefs. These activities are helping pupils to better understand British values and prepare them for the responsibilities of citizens in modern British society.
- The additional funding for physical education has been used effectively to encourage a greater interest and enthusiasm by pupils in sport and competitive games. The use of specialist sports coaches is helping to raise the teaching skills of school staff. The fund has been especially helpful in enabling disadvantaged pupils to have more opportunities to participate in after-school sports clubs.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively. The school does not tolerate discrimination. Relationships in the school are good, and pupils have equal access to the well organised and effective before- and after-school activities and clubs.
- The school works closely and effectively with other schools in the local Network 10. Staff are able to focus jointly on raising standards and the development of their own skills.

- The school works closely with the local authority's improvement advisers and has been grateful for the support it has received over some time. The authority has been supportive during the school's difficulties.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that safeguarding meets national requirements. The safety and security of pupils are reviewed regularly. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that they can identify and deal with any extremism or radicalisation should they arise.
- Leaders and governors make sure that extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. They compare these pupils' progress with that of other pupils, and analyse the extent of the gaps in performance between these pupils and others. Evidence in the inspection shows that these gaps are now closing rapidly as a result of better planning and provision for the needs of these pupils.
- Most parents have positive views about the school, as indicated through Parent View; a typical comment notes, 'My child's support, care and teaching have gone above and beyond in all aspects and I would highly recommend the school.'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Following a number of changes, all governors are now fully involved in the leadership and management of the school. Several governors now have a wide range of experience in governance, including an involvement in training new governors. Governors have improved their knowledge of the school and are challenging school leaders consistently, especially concerning pupils' progress.
 - Governors play an increasingly active role in the appointment of teachers. They have clear views of the teaching and management needs of the school.
 - The governing body's knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school has greatly improved. It is being used robustly to guide decisions on pay increases. These are based firmly on the performance targets set by senior leaders for teachers to reach, as shown by pupils' progress and attainment.
 - Governors monitor the school budget carefully and are fully involved in the allocation of additional funding. Governors evaluate how effectively the funding is used and its impact on pupils' learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although many pupils have good attitudes to learning, a small number easily lose concentration in lessons, often when the teaching is less than good. This can lead to minor disruption of the learning of the rest of the class. A few pupils become petulant if they cannot have their own way, and so do not try their best.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and feel that staff deal fairly with them. They say that the behaviour of most pupils is good, but some get 'strikes' and red or yellow cards for bad behaviour. One commented that, 'There are a few fights outside but we keep out of the way.' There have been only a handful of exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and mention many memorable learning experiences, such as watching chicks hatch and grow, a duck nesting in the playground area, and using a plan to make a wooden car in Year 2. One pupil's best day ever was, 'When I started in the school and the welcome everybody gave to me.'
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly learn what is expected of them, as shown by the way they work and play together, share and take turns.
- Attendance is average. The punctuality of many pupils has improved. However, there remain a small number of pupils who arrive late for school in the mornings, in spite of clear and robust reminders from school leaders.
- A small number of parents have concerns about how the schools deals with behaviour. The inspectors found that the school has clear guidelines on dealing with behaviour, and staff implement these with

understanding and sensitivity.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have confidence in the attention and care of the staff, and how problems are dealt with. The school site is secure and new staff are all checked rigorously prior to appointment.
- Pupils express little concern about safety, even in the event of the small amount of bullying they report. They define this mainly as name calling. They have a good understanding of the dangers of the internet and cyber-bullying. The school continually reminds them of this; e-safety messages are visible throughout the school and they are reinforced by the pupils known as 'digital ambassadors' in assemblies.
- The school works effectively with external agencies in supporting families and children who may be at risk of not doing so well. The work of the learning mentor with disadvantaged pupils is much appreciated and has played an important part in helping their academic and social development.
- Parents' responses indicate that they feel that their children are safe in school and that they are well cared for. A parental comment, typical of a number received by inspectors, is: 'The school promotes a caring environment, it cares about the children, their feelings and I feel it is a wonderful school.'
- Staff agree with these views, which are endorsed by the inspectors.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been effective enough throughout the school over time to ensure that pupils consistently reach the levels of which they are capable. Since the last inspection, regular changes of staff have affected the continuity of pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching is not consistently good across all year groups.
- Teachers in the past have not consistently provided work that is challenging enough for many pupils. There has also been limited continuity in teaching which has affected the sustained learning of pupils.
- There is evidence now that teaching has been steadily improving in this school year. This is resulting in improving attainment and progress by pupils in writing and mathematics. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and external advisers has been instrumental in helping teachers to have higher expectations and offer their pupils stronger challenges.
- However, the teaching of reading, and especially phonic skills, is still very variable. Although phonics are taught well in the Reception class, this progress has not been maintained in the rest of the school. This is because teachers have been ineffective in teaching these skills for several years.
- As a result, pupils' reading skills have also not been developed well enough. Although reading is regularly timetabled, the skills are not being taught effectively enough and standards remain too low.
- Teaching has improved considerably in writing and mathematics. This is because most teachers challenge pupils of all abilities at appropriate levels, and encourage the mostly enthusiastic learning attitudes of pupils with interesting and challenging tasks. Occasionally, a few teachers do not deal quickly enough with pupils who are not on task or are disturbing the work of other pupils.
- Good examples of teachers challenging pupils were observed in a lesson in Year 6 when pupils were learning how to use subordinate clauses in extended diary writing. In Year 5, pupils showed great concentration when learning how to use a suffix to change nouns into verbs, using examples such as 'assassin' and 'liquid'. This was challenging but also gave many pupils the opportunity to develop their dictionary skills.
- Teachers give pupils regular learning targets, and their marking of pupils' work and verbal feedback is

helpful in guiding learning. However, not all teachers are confident in analysing and using assessment and tracking data in their planning of pupils' learning.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Nearly all pupils are respectful to staff, which is a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers work closely with their teaching assistants, who know the pupils well. Teaching assistants make valuable contributions to the care and development of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, often in one-to-one learning.
- A large majority of parents indicate that they think teaching is good.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because over time, achievement has not been good in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have lacked basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching has not been good enough and has lacked continuity because of the high number of staff changes. Consequently, Pupils' progress has been patchy from year to year.
- There are clear signs of better progress in this school year, with, for example, pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 having made good progress in writing from a low baseline at the end of Key Stage 1. Inspection evidence shows that this improvement in progress has continued, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Improvement is also taking place in achievement in mathematics in most years, and is less inconsistent than in the past.
- However, mainly due to a lack of basic skills, reading is not improving at the same rate. Leaders accept this, and are urgently planning strategies to accelerate progress across the school in reading.
- Children enter the school in the Nursery with skills below those typical for their age. Their progress gradually increases when they reach Reception, where many now make good progress. In Key Stage 1, achievement has required improvement for several years because the progress of most pupils has been too slow. Few pupils have reached above average levels in any subject.
- Although attainment remained below average at the end of Year 2 in 2014, it showed improvement in writing and in mathematics particularly. Evidence now indicates that improvement has continued this year and many more pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. The rising progress in writing and mathematics is mirrored in Key Stage 2.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been similar to that of other pupils in the last few years and so requires improvement. These pupils are now making better progress because the school has a much greater knowledge of their needs and this is being implemented in planning for their learning and progress.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils has required improvement for several years. Few pupils by the end of Year 6 have reached higher than average attainment in any subject. Examination of their books shows that more of them than in the past are reaching higher levels in most years because more challenging teaching is leading to better learning. This improvement is recent and has not yet been sustained for long enough to be securely good.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving quickly. In 2014 their progress was similar to other pupils in school in writing and was better than pupils nationally; in reading their progress was better than others in school and similar to pupils nationally; their progress in mathematics was below that of others in school and nationally. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was about a year below average in English and two years below mathematics. This is due to a legacy of several years of slow progress of these pupils prior to this school year. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and a detailed examination of school data shows that the gap in attainment, especially in mathematics, has closed rapidly in the last year and continues to do so throughout the school.

- Most pupils, although not all, enjoy reading. They have frequent reading time in lessons, but this is not always used to best effect to increase their reading skills. Their understanding of phonics in all years is below that expected and limits their reading development. School leaders rightly believe that pupils should have more opportunities to read to adults, and are developing new home/school initiatives to encourage pupils to read more often at home.
- As the new curriculum becomes more established, pupils are steadily improving their achievement in other subjects. This includes the more regular promotion of literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects. This has not been done sufficiently in the past in order to enhance pupils' skills and knowledge.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start in the Nursery with skills and experience below those typical for their age. A significant number have skills well below those normally seen in literacy and physical development.
- The deputy headteacher has recently taken over the leadership of the early years. Leadership and management requires improvement. Leaders have recognised that planning and provision for children's needs require further development, especially in the comparatively new Nursery. Leaders have identified the need to focus on managing children's feelings and behaviour, reading and using media and materials. These are areas where children have made less progress than in other areas of their development.
- Although children in the Nursery make good progress in several areas of learning, especially in listening and maintaining their attention, their progress is much more variable in other key areas of learning. This is because teaching through questioning is not always sufficiently challenging and children are not confident in learning to make decisions for themselves.
- When children join the Reception class, their learning accelerates and they start to make good progress in many areas. Children's reading and writing skills are developing rapidly because phonics are taught effectively and children have a range of opportunities to write independently.
- An example of this was observed when children were encouraged to look at the life cycles of living things, in particular, the life of a frog. Tadpoles fascinated many and this was a strong stimulus for their writing activities. Classroom displays also celebrate children's writing as, for example, when they wrote about the parts of a plant.
- Children's behaviour is good. Although unsure as to what is expected when they start in Nursery, children soon learn to work and play together happily. They are keen to learn and gradually develop self-confidence.
- Teaching sometimes provides exciting and stimulating activities for children, especially in Reception. However, it is not consistently good enough to ensure good progress across the early years.
- Children in both classes are kept safe and secure, and staff and older pupils ensure that they are well cared for at all times.
- Staff work closely with parents who are pleased with the way their children settle to school life. The school is developing opportunities for parents to join in their children's learning and has successfully introduced opportunities for 'mothers and tots' to become familiar with the school prior to starting.

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	103705
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	462587

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Stephen Burch
Headteacher	Debbie Middleton
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2013
Telephone number	024 7646 4475
Fax number	024 7646 8878
Email address	admin@leigh.coventry.sch.uk

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