

Leamore Primary School

Bloxwich Road, Walsall WS3 2BB

Inspection dates

12–13 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Too few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in Key Stage 2 is too variable. It is not consistently good.
- Progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 is too slow.
- Leadership and management is not yet good. There has been insufficient time to fully see the impact of the work of the senior leaders. In addition, leaders do not always analyse information to accurately measure improvements.
- Not all teachers with additional responsibilities are making checks on the quality of learning in their subject area.
- Some teachers require pupils to complete work that is too easy, which prevents them from showing what they are capable of.
- The use of logic and reasoning skills in mathematics is underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use what they learn in mathematics and English in other curriculum subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are variable because not all teachers have the same high expectations. In addition, some pupils have not yet learned to behave well when they are not directly observed by an adult.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and her team are committed, tenacious and proactive. As a result of their work, in the short time they have been in post, they have ensured that this is an improving school. All staff work hard and want the school to succeed.
- Early years provision and teaching, learning and assessment in Key Stage 1 are good. This is down to effective leadership and management.
- Safeguarding is a priority. Leaders go above and beyond their statutory duties to protect pupils from harm. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a safe place. Attendance, though below average, is rising.
- Governance is strong and effective. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's work. They are not afraid to make tough decisions and have high expectations of the leaders. They provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils is good. Adults know individual pupils well and relationships are positive and caring. Support for pupils' social and emotional well-being is effective, including for those who demonstrate particularly challenging behaviour or are looked after by the local authority.

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Key Stage 2 and further accelerate the progress of all pupils by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations about what pupils can achieve so that activities require pupils to think and work hard
 - enabling all teachers to use the information they have about pupils' past progress to plan learning that builds on what pupils already know, so that pupils do not mark time in lessons by completing tasks that are well within their capabilities
 - providing pupils with opportunities to apply their mathematical and writing skills in a range of different subjects
 - teaching pupils to use logic and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - analysing the recorded incidents of poor behaviour to identify any patterns or trends and to show if improvement actions are having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour
 - ensuring that teachers with additional responsibilities make checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their area of responsibility.
- Continue to improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in the classroom, in the corridors and at social times
 - expecting pupils to listen to adults when they are speaking rather than call out or continue to talk to their friends.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement – in part, because the systems and initiatives put in place by the recently appointed interim headteacher and her leadership team have not yet had sufficient time to embed and fully impact on pupils' learning.
- Although teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection, inconsistencies remain in Key Stage 2. Too few pupils make good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 in order to reach the expected and higher levels of attainment. In addition, at the end of Key Stage 1, too few pupils reach the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The interim headteacher has taken swift and decisive action since her appointment. She has an accurate view of the areas that still need to improve and is systematically tackling these issues. The recently appointed leadership team is cohesive, hardworking and determined, and has secured the support of the staff and parents. In a short space of time, the team has created a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement. Since its appointment the pace of improvement has increased.
- There are indications that behaviour is improving as a result of higher expectations. However, although incidents of poor behaviour are meticulously recorded, leaders are not yet analysing this information for patterns and trends to see if their actions are making a difference.
- The interim headteacher has introduced a new system for tracking pupils' achievement. Information about pupils' attainment is checked carefully for accuracy and analysed in detail. As a result, leaders have a clear view of how well different groups of pupils are achieving. However, this system has only recently been introduced and leaders do not yet have the same level of detail about pupils' progress. As a result, they are not able to identify how quickly pupils who have fallen behind are catching up with their classmates.
- Senior leaders have effective and efficient systems in place for making frequent checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide helpful feedback, which enables teachers to see where their practice is effective and where it needs to improve. Leaders have been decisive in supporting and tackling teaching that is not yet good. However, teachers who have responsibility for subjects other than mathematics and English are not yet fully involved in making checks on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in their areas of responsibility.
- Thorough systems are in place for managing teachers' performance. This year's targets for staff are appropriately challenging. The impact of performance management is not yet fully evident in ensuring consistently good teaching and learning.
- Staff at all levels are benefiting from a programme of training, coaching and development. As a result teaching is improving. For example, as a result of support provided by the mathematics subject leader, the quality of marking and verbal feedback in this subject is increasingly consistent and of improving quality.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well catered for. The curriculum includes an appropriately broad range of subjects and covers a good range of relevant and interesting topics. Pupils' learning is enhanced by interesting trips and visitors to the school. Staff have developed an effective programme of learning in personal, social, health and economic education called 'Aspire'. This, along with religious education and a programme of assemblies, supports pupils' learning about respect for people of different faiths and people of no faith, as well the values of tolerance, democracy and freedom of speech. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The recently appointed leader for pupils with disabilities or special educational needs has quickly implemented procedures and systems not previously in place. Parents and pupils are now more involved in setting learning targets and additional support is now in place for those pupils who need it. In a short space of time the leader has gained an accurate overview of this area of responsibility. It is too soon to fully assess the impact of her work.
- The interim headteacher has made good use of the support of the local authority, for example with complex staffing issues, safeguarding concerns and attendance. This level of support has not consistently been in place since the last inspection. The most recent local authority adviser has provided effective support for the new leadership team to enable it to 'hit the ground running'.

■ The governance of the school

- Governance has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Under the decisive leadership of the co-chairs, governors play an increasingly strategic role in the life of the school. They have the same attitude of continuous self-improvement exhibited by the headteacher and her team.
 - As a result of careful planning and recruitment, governors have a broad range of relevant skills to ensure that they can support and challenge the school appropriately. They are well informed about the work of the leaders through headteacher reports, visiting school to make checks for themselves, comparing Leamore with other schools and taking advice from the local authority. They are astutely aware of the areas that still require further improvement.
 - Governors have taken on individual areas of responsibility, for example safeguarding. They make visits to the school to make checks and as a result are increasingly knowledgeable about their area of responsibility. Their reports to the full governing body are informative and detailed.
 - Governors are aware that they do not yet fully hold leaders to account for the impact of the pupil premium and sports funding.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safeguarding leader is extremely knowledgeable and along with her team goes above and beyond the statutory requirements in order to keep pupils safe. They form a cohesive unit and are proactive in their work with other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm. They make effective use of a range of information including attendance and behaviour records to gain a clear picture of each pupil's needs. All staff understand the procedures to follow if they are worried about a pupil. Any concerns raised are followed up quickly and recorded in detail. Leaders have considered specific aspects of child protection that may have relevance in this school. For example, teaching staff have received effective training on the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because, although there are many aspects of good teaching in the school, this is not consistently the case across all classes and subjects in Key Stage 2. It is this lack of consistency that prevents teaching from being good overall.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what can be achieved in a lesson or across a series of lessons. Time is not always used as productively as it could be and as a result progress is not good for some pupils.
- Pupils do not have many opportunities to use what they learn in mathematics and English in other curriculum subjects. In addition there are too few opportunities to develop pupils' logic and reasoning skills. This prevents them from broadening their understanding of mathematics in different contexts and in practical and real-life situations.
- Most-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and make slower progress than they are capable of. This is because in some classes and subjects they have to complete work that is too easy before they move on to more difficult tasks.
- Low-level disruptive behaviour such as talking while the teacher is talking, and shouting out, slows the pace of learning in some Key Stage 2 classes. In some instances this behaviour goes unchallenged and pupils waste valuable learning time.
- In early years, Key Stage 1 and Year 6, adults expect pupils to produce high-quality work in all subjects – pupils respond to this and generally take pride in their work. In other classes this is not always the case and the quality of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics can be sloppy and untidy.
- Despite these inconsistencies, there are many strengths evident in teaching. Evidence from workbooks show that pupils benefit from using practical resources and pictures in mathematics to support and help them to explain their learning. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to explain their thinking and give longer answers. This supports their learning and also their speaking and listening skills. Teaching assistants and additional adults are used effectively to support learning and have effective working relationships with teachers. This is particularly evident in early years.
- Where pupils are making good progress, adults provide them with written and verbal feedback that supports improvement. Pupils learn from the comments or can see where they made errors. This leads to improvements in subsequent pieces of work.

- The teaching of reading is effective. Phonics lessons are interesting, well-paced and make clear links between the sounds letters make, spelling, reading and writing. Adults have good subject knowledge and apply it well to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and caring. Adults know individual pupils well and go the extra mile to support their social and emotional development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen and confident to talk about their school and their learning, and understand that adults want them to work hard to learn new things. They can explain the behaviours that support good learning, like listening, concentrating and asking questions. Not all pupils are able to apply this learning in all their lessons.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in different situations. For example, they can explain how to minimise risks when using the internet and are aware that people online may not always be who they say they are. In addition, pupils have benefited from learning about the NSPCC 'underwear rule' and having visits from the local police and fire service.
- Pupils understand the importance of making healthy choices about what they eat and can explain the effects of exercise on their body. This is as a result of effective learning in physical education, science and personal, social, health and economic education.
- Adults provide pupils with a range of opportunities to take on responsibilities and give their own opinion on issues and events. For example, pupils enjoy being 'recycling reps' and 'admin assistants' and are encouraged to answer for themselves, 'Who made the world?' and 'Who is God?' This supports their personal development and self-confidence effectively.
- Pupils understand that bullying can take different forms and they can explain how this is different from 'falling out' with one another. None of the pupils or parents who spoke to inspectors, or expressed an opinion on the online questionnaire, ParentView, have concerns about bullying in the school.
- Adults know individual pupils and their circumstances well and are proactive in meeting their social and emotional needs. As a result, the personal development and welfare of disadvantaged pupils, those who demonstrate challenging behaviour and those looked after by the local authority are good.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some learning is interrupted by low-level disruption which goes unchecked by the adults. This behaviour is evident in a small number of classes. It is this inconsistency which prevents behaviour overall from being good.
- When pupils are supervised, their behaviour around the school is calm and sensible. However, on occasions, when pupils are not directly supervised, they do not maintain self-discipline, even though they are aware of the rules about running and moving through doorways sensibly to avoid injury.
- Pupils are confident that behaviour is improving and that adults are fair and firm when incidents of poor behaviour occur. However, pupils and the school's own records identify that the incidents of poor behaviour remain high and as yet the leaders are not able to demonstrate that this is improving as a result of their work.
- Good manners and politeness are evident and almost appear instinctive in many pupils. They hold doors open for one another and for adults without being asked, they ask for things in the classroom and the dining hall politely and they automatically say thank you when appropriate.
- The interim headteacher and her leaders have reinforced high expectations of behaviour and made changes to the way sanctions are imposed. Pupils report adults to be 'strict but fair'. As a result of these changes, the number of fixed-term exclusions has increased markedly since the last inspection. Exclusion is used appropriately as a last resort for pupils who demonstrate particularly challenging behaviour. Leaders are aware that this is a short-term measure and as expectations are reinforced this number should decrease.
- As a result of comprehensive procedures to follow up on absence and lateness, attendance is improving, although it remains below the national average for primary schools. Leaders have successfully reduced the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent or who are late for school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not all pupils, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2, make good progress throughout the school.
- There is a significant proportion of pupils who are not at the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is because teaching is not yet good enough to enable pupils to make up for previous lost ground and catch up with their peers in other schools.
- The progress of most-able pupils is inconsistent between classes and subjects. This is because some teachers do not take into consideration what these pupils can already do when planning learning. As a result, these pupils do not progress as quickly as they could and some coast along completing work that is too easy.
- The rates of progress in early years and Key Stage 1 are better than those seen in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This demonstrates good progress across Key Stage 1 and a much improved picture from the time of the last inspection.
- Children join the early years with skills and abilities below those that are typical for children of their age, particularly in language and social development. For example, children have difficulty in following simple instructions, speaking in sentences and making themselves understood. As a result of effective teaching, learning and assessment they make good progress in all the areas of learning. They achieve well at the end of the year and are in a good position to begin Year 1.
- This positive picture is not sufficiently built on throughout Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics. At the end of 2015, pupils in Year 6 had made insufficient progress in mathematics and their test results were well below those achieved by their peers in other schools. Although pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are making better progress than in the past, this is a recent improvement and has not yet been sufficient to enable pupils to make up for lost ground. Progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 is stronger than that seen in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is improving and is increasingly effective. As a result, in the most recent phonics check in Year 1, a higher proportion of pupils met the standard than in the past. However, when compared with other schools nationally, Leamore's results remain below the national average.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly at school and are expected to read regularly at home. Pupils enjoy weekly visits to their school library, which is well stocked and inviting. They can talk about the types of books they like and the authors that they enjoy. Regular 'guided reading' lessons support pupils in effectively developing their reading skills.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving. This is as a result of improvements to provision made by the recently appointed leader. Not all are yet making good progress; some variabilities remain.
- Similarly, the provision for disadvantaged pupils has improved; however, their progress varies as a result of inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment.

Early years provision

is good

- Provision in early years is good because it is well led and managed and teaching is good. As a result, children quickly gain new skills and knowledge and are well prepared to begin Year 1 by the end of the year. This demonstrates good progress from where children started.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have successfully created bright, stimulating and fun spaces for children to learn and play in. The indoor and outdoor learning areas are tidy, well-organised and purposeful. Children have access to a broad range of good-quality and interesting resources that encourage them to use their imagination and be creative. Adults skilfully join in with children's play, asking effective questions to help children to learn new things and develop their skills.
- Adults are effective in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. 'Talking tins' are used well to ensure that children independently access each of the learning activities available by listening to the instructions. The 'conversation station' is effective in ensuring that children regularly have the opportunity to speak to an adult about something that interests them. As a result, children are confident to speak to one another and to adults. This was evident during the inspection when children were keen to show the

inspector their rabbit and explain how they look after it.

- Procedures and routines for keeping children safe are securely in place. Adults know each child well and relationships are warm, caring and respectful. It is evident from observing their interactions that children feel safe and secure and trust the adults. Parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Children understand the classroom rules, for example about sharing, not running and being polite. Adults are good role models and children generally behave well. Additional support is provided for the small number of children who find it difficult to conform to the required standards of behaviour.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors stated that they feel involved in their child's learning as a result of good communication, workshops and information sessions. They are appreciative that staff are 'approachable and friendly'.

School details

Unique reference number	104157
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	00001608

This inspection 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	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Buick and Vanessa Holding
Interim Headteacher	Michelle Hill
Telephone number	01922 710514
Website	http://leamoreblogs.net
Email address	postbox@leamore.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2013

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Almost half of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are cared for by the local authority). This is double the national average.
- There is a below-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are no pupils who do not speak English as their first language.
- At one in five, there is a higher than average proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Early years provision takes the form of a nursery with morning and afternoon sessions and one full-time Reception class.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- There has been considerable turbulence in staffing since the last inspection. The interim headteacher and the leadership team have been in post since May 2015. Interviews for the substantive headteacher post are due to take place this month.

Information about this inspection

- During the two-day inspection, inspectors observed lessons and conducted 'learning walks' around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' current workbooks.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors also heard pupils from Years 1 to 4 read.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body including the co-chairs and vice-chair. Meetings were also held with senior leaders, teachers with responsibilities for subject areas, the leader in charge of safeguarding and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documents provided by the school, including information relating to pupils' attainment, attendance, safeguarding and the checks leaders make on the quality of teaching.
- The views of parents were gathered by speaking to parents at the beginning and end of the school day and from the 18 responses to the online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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