

# Laira Green Primary School

Bramley Road, Laira, Plymouth PL3 6BP

<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 April 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This a good school

- The senior leadership team has developed a shared and strong commitment from all staff to improving pupils' learning and achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good, particularly in mathematics. Teachers and highly effective teaching assistants challenge pupils' thinking with good questions.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are keen readers and progress in reading is strong. Leaders have used very effective strategies to develop pupils' love of books.
- Teachers in Years 1 to 6 make regular checks on what pupils understand. Together with school leaders they plan work that matches groups of pupils' needs well.
- Pupils feel safe and parents value the care their children receive.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs or disability make good progress. The school uses additional funding well to promote pupils' confidence and achievement.
- The school is very orderly and pupils behave very well in lessons. They are eager to learn and respond well to challenging teaching.
- Pupils are given opportunities to learn in different ways. They value chances to learn outdoors and on residential visits.
- Governors support leaders well to make improvements and challenge them to achieve good outcomes.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Early years teachers assess children's progress frequently but their assessments are not precise enough. Consequently, the work they plan is not well adapted to meet the children's different needs, particularly those who start school with skills and knowledge above those expected for their age.
- When tackling written tasks, pupils are not always given scope to write in depth or with expression. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress learning about grammar and writing techniques.

## Full report

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

- Develop deeply rooted assessment of what children in the early years know and can do so that teaching can be adapted to meet their different needs, particularly for the most able.
- Increase the proportion of pupils who can write at greater depth by:
  - making sure that the school's plans, to give pupils frequent opportunities to write with expression and for different purposes and audiences, are applied consistently
  - developing pupils' ability to apply their good knowledge of spelling in their writing
  - ensuring that pupils' handwriting is as good as possible in all their written work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has built a team of leaders who share her commitment to raising expectations and pupils' aspirations and achievement. Leaders have focused effectively on addressing the issues identified for improvement in the last inspection and teaching is now good.
- Development planning is more precise and carefully checked through systems of self-evaluation. Leaders, particularly those leading subjects, know well where improvements are still to be made and are working closely with teachers to bring these about.
- Senior and middle leaders play a strong role in securing the quality of assessment in key stages 1 and 2. This has been a key strategy in bringing about improvements to teaching, progress and attainment. Assessments are made on a wide range of evidence from pupils' work and decisions about the next steps for pupils' learning are planned by teachers and leaders working together. Midyear staff changes in early years mean that these successful systems are not yet having the good impact on outcomes seen in other parts of the school.
- Leaders devise training programmes for staff which are focused clearly on helping pupils to make progress. Teachers' skills are kept up to date. The training they have had to teach mathematics has helped them to plan lessons which are challenging pupils and improving their progress.
- The school has provided training to help staff understand the possible barriers to learning which some pupils may have. This has meant that staff deal sensitively with pupils and help them to get the best from their education.
- The school's curriculum is effective and increasingly so for reading and mathematics. Although leaders have adapted the curriculum for writing, to take account of the new national curriculum, the focus has been on grammar and spelling. This has been effective but the aspects of the curriculum which would encourage pupils to write at length and in greater depth are not happening often enough.
- Opportunities to use the curriculum as a way of building pupils' confidence, resilience and aspirations are wide, effective and at the heart of the school. Pupils eagerly attend homework and revision classes as well as clubs which teach them new skills such as chess or tap-dancing. The school is successful in competitions and is rightly proud of its choir, and pupils work in the allotment. Learning takes place outdoors for all children so they learn forest skills and acquire practical skills relevant to science and geography.
- The school promotes British values, particularly in respect of valuing individuals and respecting other cultures. Good links have been built with a Nepalese school with pupils using technology to connect their classroom to their friends in Nepal. Pupils share their learning and, at the time of the earthquake in Nepal, they were able to send their sympathies. Pupils have also explored the principles of democracy by voting for their school council and visiting the office of the city mayor.
- Parents are positive about the opportunities the school gives their children and they are increasingly supporting home learning and encouraging their children to have high expectations.
- Leaders and governors have a strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to support equal access to all that the school has to offer and to extend pupils' experiences. Funding spent on teaching to help pupils catch up is used well and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is now higher than that of other groups nationally.
- Leaders have expertise which supports the inclusion of pupils who have a wide range of special educational needs or disability. These pupils make strong progress. This is because their progress is tracked rigorously and support for them is regularly adjusted.
- Leaders have used the additional funding for the development of sport on working closely with skilled coaches. This has increased the range of sports on offer to include dance and hockey. Participation has increased because of more sporting opportunities at lunchtime and at the end of the day.
- The local authority has supported the development of leadership through links with experienced local leaders. This has been effective and has helped the school to now develop its own professional networks.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have used the review of their work and training well to develop a new structure for their meetings. They have a good knowledge of how well the school is doing through their increased understanding of assessment information which they can access directly themselves. The meeting structure they now have is closely focused on school improvement.

- Governors are now more strategic in their approach than at the last inspection. They are able to articulate the steps the school has taken to raise standards in reading. They seek information at regular meetings with subject leaders to help them decide the future direction of the school.
- Governors bring a good range of skills to their discussions and particularly share the headteacher’s commitment to an inclusive school. They have a good knowledge of community issues and are strongly focused on raising pupils’ confidence and aspirations. They take advice from school leaders when deciding how additional funding should be spent, but challenge leaders to ensure that the spending leads to the best outcomes.
- Governors visit the school regularly and particularly celebrate the school’s achievements with pupils. They keep themselves informed of the work of the school by paying visits to classrooms with senior leaders.
- Governors support safeguarding through having a named governor who works with school leaders and also through carrying out regular checks on health and safety.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has robust policies and processes to protect children from harm and is rigorous on checking up on children missing from education. The school has good procedures for vetting staff at the time of recruitment. Staff have undergone training to equip them to support any pupil who could be at risk of radicalisation.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Teachers plan lessons based securely on frequent, broad and accurate assessment. They share and discuss these assessments with leaders and with all staff working with the pupils. Consequently, pupils are challenged to reach the next steps in their learning quickly and they make good progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is particularly strong and well matched to the new national curriculum. Pupils develop their understanding of shape and their skills of calculation well, and are given frequent opportunities to apply and deepen their knowledge. Teachers and skilled teaching assistants ask pupils to explain their thinking and to give convincing explanations for their answers. Pupils are free to choose their own methods to reach an answer and show good reasoning skills when they explain their thinking.
- The school’s systems for teaching reading are wide and effective. Consequently, the rate of progress in reading has accelerated. Secure teaching for phonics (the sounds letters make) gets pupils off to a good start but equally the wider skills of reading are taught and assessed systematically. When pupils read independently, their understanding is checked through quizzes which the pupils enjoy completing. Comprehension is taught well and interventions for reading, both for pupils who have special educational needs or disability and those in danger of falling behind, are highly effective. Pupils are now keen readers and proud of how often they read.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in lessons, particularly in mathematics. Their workbooks show that they relish and respond well to the challenges they are given.
- Teachers have developed pupils’ understanding of grammar and punctuation well. In all classes, pupils apply these in their writing and are making good progress within the expected level for their age. However, fewer pupils write at the greater depth required for the higher levels. While some year groups are being given opportunities to write at length to fully express their ideas with detail and expression, this is not yet consistent across the school.
- Equally, pupils are not consistently using their wide knowledge of spelling words accurately when they write at length. Teachers have recognised the need to develop fluent handwriting and teach this well, but pupils do not always use their improved handwriting in their independent written work with the consistency needed to reach the higher levels.
- Teachers check pupils’ understanding in lessons but pupils are good at working independently because they use the ‘stuck ladder’ when they are unsure of how to carry on in their work. Rather than immediately putting up their hand for help, they look back at earlier work, ask a friend or use the learning resources in their classroom. In a mathematics lesson, younger pupils were seen independently grappling with proving the number of faces on different 3D shapes. They worked together, drawing diagrams and discussing their thoughts with their classmates. They made notes on the shapes and on the paper to prove their conclusions. Only then did they check their answers with the teacher.

- Pupils understand and value the way they are taught. They can explain that they are given time to practise new skills but then have to try something 'trickier' before moving on to new learning. Teachers have explained the curriculum and its demands well, and so pupils understand the purpose of what they are being taught and are prepared to work hard because it 'gets you where you need to be'.
- Teachers apply the school's policy for feedback to pupils consistently so pupils can understand what they have done well. Pupils value the chance to make their own assessment of their success in their work and to review this with their classmates.
- Teachers set homework regularly and the homework for reading has successfully nurtured pupils' love of books. Teachers rigorously check that homework is done and support pupils in a homework club if they need to catch up. Early morning reading sessions are popular and effective as are the well-attended revision classes for the older pupils.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy school and eagerly participate in the wide range of opportunities open to them.
- Pupils are very focused on making progress by themselves. They track their own successes within lessons and also through the quizzes and small tests on basic skills. They talk with pride about their improving scores for spelling and multiplication tables, and they set their own targets for improvement.
- Pupils are reflective about their own learning, understand the needs of others and are positive about taking extra help if they need it. They are also able to reflect on the wider questions of life. Their writing about creation and the questions it raises for all religions shows an ability to think deeply and strengthens their spiritual awareness.
- Contributing to their social skills, the school has a focus on team spirit and pupils are keen to collect house points for their team. The successes of the school choir and the school's winning allotment are sources of pride for all.
- Parents value the opportunities which the school provides to extend the curriculum, and both parents and pupils recognise the importance of fairness and of everyone being included in the school's exciting residential trips in this country and in France.
- In the playground pupils play together harmoniously. They show a respect for the play equipment and share it fairly. They also value the trust placed in them to move freely around the school and find something to do inside if they choose.
- While most pupils value their education and come to school regularly, the school is still having to tackle the attendance of some pupils robustly. Overall, however, attendance is improving and is higher than last year when it was in line with the national average.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good, and parents and pupils agree that it is. From when they enter school in the morning to when they leave after school events, pupils move around purposefully and respectfully. They are polite and courteous, and overall the school is a very orderly environment.
- Pupils understand the school's values and rules and feel that if the rules are broken, then the behaviour pyramid of consequences is fair. Their understanding of right and wrong is good.
- Parents, staff and pupils all agree that the school is a safe place. Pupils can see that there have been improvements in the way they work and play together. They have confidence that should any bullying occur, staff would quickly deal with it. They say there is no name-calling and that pupils from all the communities the school serves respect each other.
- Pupils can explain the teaching they have had to stay safe, which includes teaching about staying safe online. They and their parents value the safety measures the school takes around site safety and the arrangements for parents to collect them safely from school.
- The school is inclusive and has good systems for supporting a very small number of pupils with challenging behaviour. Leaders have good evidence that the use of outside agencies and working with parents has had a positive impact on the behaviour of a few individuals.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. Workbooks and the school's records show that pupils are making good progress, particularly in mathematics and in reading. This is equally true for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability, because both groups are making particularly strong progress and funding for them is spent wisely and effectively.
- The acceleration of progress was also seen in lessons. Teachers use precise assessments to plan to close gaps in pupils' skills and understanding. The involvement of all staff in assessments, and the quality of the professional dialogue with senior leaders to support planning, are key reasons progress has improved.
- Pupils gain skills securely in science, history and technology, and displays around the school show their investigative skills and wide knowledge of these subjects.
- Pupils are making good progress in the technical aspects of writing required by the new national curriculum, particularly in grammar and punctuation. This is making their writing more precise. They are learning the spelling of the words expected for their age and their handwriting is improving.
- The most-able pupils are making very strong progress in reading and mathematics because they are challenged well in these subjects. Not all of them are making as much progress in writing because they are not applying their spelling and handwriting skills in depth, nor are they all having chances to practise expressing their thoughts and ideas at that level.
- Attainment has risen in recent national assessment tests at both key stages 1 and 2. At the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was just above the national average in 2015. For pupils who had been in the school for the whole preceding two years, the outcomes were even higher compared with national averages.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 and key stage 2 was broadly in line with other groups nationally and the gap in attainment within school is closing.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics was in line with the national average last year. However current evidence from lessons and the information held by the school shows that standards in phonics are much higher this year and more pupils are on track to reach expectations.
- The school is rigorous in tracking and supporting those pupils who join the school other than at the normal time of entry. Well-planned and taught interventions are giving them chances to catch up.
- Teachers share information about pupils' achievement and this, together with pupils' good behaviour, ensures that their movement across and beyond the school is smooth.

## The early years provision

requires improvement

- After staff changes midyear, leadership has yet to generate the improvements needed. Consequently, while assessments have been frequent, currently they are not finely tuned enough on what children know and can do to enable teachers to plan precisely for the next steps in learning for all children.
- Almost all children enter the Reception classes with skills, in language particularly, considerably lower than those usual for their age. The teaching of phonics is good and children from most starting points make sound progress.
- However, a few children enter Reception at a developmental stage above that expected for their age. It is especially for these children that assessment is not precise enough for teachers to plan activities matching their needs. Consequently, for the most-able children, activities across the curriculum are not always challenging enough to move them on quickly from their starting points.
- Children are gaining mathematical skills securely. They were seen working enthusiastically outdoors on a number hunt. When activities are broad and challenging in this way, learning is more rapid.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability is in line with that of other children. The good support of skilled teaching assistants contributes to this.
- Children use the indoor and outdoor learning spaces well. They have good opportunities to climb and balance, and teachers plan interesting activities such as planting and growing, which help children to understand the world around them.

- Children's progress in their personal and social skills is good because of the good relationships and well-established routines which help them to settle into school quickly. They behave well and understand how to keep themselves safe by following the expected routines. They are learning to listen carefully to their teachers and respond well when they are guided to improve their spoken language.
- Parents are very positive about the start that their children get in the Reception classes. They are helped to support their children's learning and they contribute to their children's assessment. Parents value the secure systems which safeguard children at the beginning and end of the day at handover.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113278
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011307

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	282
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Wickett
<b>Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge</b>	Daisy Bailey
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 660427
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lairagreen.com">www.lairagreen.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:laira.green.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk">laira.green.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4–5 November 2014

## Information about this school

- Laura Green is an average-sized primary school. It has more pupils than at the time of its last inspection.
- Children in the Reception classes and pupils in key stage 1 are taught in classes with single-aged groups. Pupils in key stage 2 are taught in five mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. Although the school has an increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, the proportion is still lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- More pupils than is usual join the school at times other than normal starting points.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- A pre-school (Green Shoots) is located within the school grounds. It is not managed by the governors and is inspected separately.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of information on its website.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons and made short visits to three others. Almost all observations took place jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks for mathematics and writing, and reviewed the assessment information which the school held.
- Meetings were held with leaders and governors. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and reviewed the 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of the school's own survey of parents' views of the school and their written comments.
- Inspectors took the views of staff into account through 15 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils to hear their views of the school. They spoke to pupils in lessons and in the playground at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and also made a visit to the site near to the school where pupils were involved in outdoor education.

## Inspection team

Wendy Marriott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stewart Gale	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Ross	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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