

Leigh Primary School

Walker Lane, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 5PL

Inspection dates	24–25 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have been successful in their drive to raise standards since the previous inspection. Pupils are now making good progress. Their achievement has steadily improved in all subjects.
- Senior leaders have worked tirelessly and effectively to secure improvements in teaching and learning and to raise expectations across the school. Teaching, learning and assessment are now good.
- Leaders and managers have addressed the areas for improvement from the last inspection with vigour and they know the school well, as shown in their accurate self-evaluation.
- Leaders and staff are particularly effective in helping pupils from a wide range of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds to settle into school well and harmoniously; this is an inclusive school.
- The high-quality displays in classrooms and around the school, together with the effective guidance available to pupils, result in a purposeful environment that encourages learning.
- The school has strengthened how it supports disadvantaged pupils; consequently, their progress has accelerated.
- Pupils behave well around school and in lessons; they are keen to learn and show positive attitudes. They often ensure their own work is neat and presented well.
- Pupils say that school is a safe and friendly place to be. Any minor playground 'fall outs' are quickly dealt with by staff.
- The Nursery and Reception classes form a strong early years department. This well-resourced and well-managed provision ensures that children get off to a good start. They make good progress in readiness for key stage 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always know where their strengths lie in subjects and, therefore, which areas of their work they need to concentrate on to improve. They are unclear about their targets for improvement.
- The effectiveness of teachers' questioning skills is variable; when less effective, opportunities to deepen pupils' thinking and understanding are missed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the progress that pupils make, by:
 - ensuring that pupils know which aspects of a subject they are good at and which areas they need to work on to improve
 - setting and sharing simple targets to help pupils focus their efforts
 - linking the feedback pupils currently receive to the identified targets for improvement in line with the school's policy.

- Improve the effectiveness of teachers' questioning so that it deepens pupils' learning consistently, by:
 - developing teachers' questioning so it encourages more pupils to respond more fully
 - identifying techniques and phrases that enable pupils' responses to be built on to deepen the thinking and the understanding of all pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Due to the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher was acting headteacher during the inspection. The acting headteacher was supported by the assistant headteacher. Both leaders know the school very well. Their ability to run the school seamlessly in the headteacher's absence is an indicator of the school's overall strong capacity in leadership and management. The school's senior leadership team members are very supportive of each other and work very effectively together.
- Senior leaders, middle leaders and staff have worked hard to respond positively to the findings of the previous inspection. They have addressed the weaknesses identified previously and show a clear and ambitious vision to make the school the best it can be. Senior leaders have developed an inclusive, welcoming school where the needs of pupils come first and teaching and learning are enjoyable and purposeful. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and standards have risen across the school.
- In order to tackle specific areas for improvement, school leaders established 'targeted action groups' that include a senior member of staff, two teachers and two teaching assistants. Each group was given a specific focus for improvement and this included reviewing current practice, making recommendations and feeding back to all staff. This strategy has led to improved practice being developed across the school.
- Senior leaders' self-evaluation of the school's performance is accurate. They know the school well and can demonstrate their impact across key areas of the school's work. Leaders also understand what needs to improve further. There are clear procedures in place to check on the quality of teaching, learning and the progress that all pupils make.
- The leadership and organisation of special educational needs provision have been strengthened. Pupils requiring additional support are identified early and the support is organised well. In-class support is complemented by a small-group 'nurture' programme that helps to develop pupils' resilience and self-esteem.
- Subject leaders have worked hard to strengthen reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Their success can be seen in the improved quality of learning taking place in lessons, but also in the abundance of literacy and numeracy guidance displayed in classrooms and around the school.
- Senior leaders monitor very carefully the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils within the school and nationally. School data shows that the gaps are closing, particularly at key stage 2. The impact of pupil premium funding is carefully assessed by the headteacher and discussed and evaluated by the governors.
- Work to develop and embed the new primary national curriculum is well underway. Leaders are evaluating and reshaping the curriculum so that it better meets the needs of the pupils and, in doing so, are looking for gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. The curriculum is broad and balanced, as is reflected in the many inspiring displays around the school. The school has worked closely with an artist who has enhanced the range of art activities that take place in school. After-school clubs enhance and enrich the curriculum and are enjoyed by pupils.
- The primary school physical education and sports funding is used well to increase pupils' participation in sport, provide staff training and secure the services of a specialist sports coach.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well. Leaders work with a range of partners to broaden pupils' experiences of the world. Assemblies and class reflection times are used effectively to promote pupils' spirituality, moral understanding and social awareness. Additional activities include educational visits to places of interest, visiting groups, and after-school and lunchtime clubs. The breakfast club has proved successful in nurturing social interaction among pupils of different ages. Pupils are developing a good understanding of fundamental British values. They learn about tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils also enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being members of the school council.
- Parents with whom inspectors spoke were extremely positive about the school, particularly in how it encourages and helps their children settle into school life quickly. They commented that they feel the school has an 'open door', that they can raise issues or concerns and that these will be listened to.
- The school's website is user-friendly and accessible to parents, including those who have limited understanding of the English language. The website provides useful information, including details of the curriculum.

- The local authority has provided good support to the school. It has worked with subject leaders, reviewed the quality of teaching and learning and conducted a scrutiny of the work in pupils' books. Feedback from the local authority has helped leaders to shape professional development for teachers.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body is well organised and has strengthened its impact on the life of the school since the last inspection. The governors have demonstrated that they are able to hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance and also offer their support and encouragement.
 - The minutes of governing body meetings are sharp and evaluative. Reports are regularly produced by the chairs of the governing body's sub-committees and are systematically considered by the full governing body at their termly meetings. The strategic committee of the governing body has played a key role in shaping and effectively monitoring the improvements the school has made since the last inspection.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's safeguarding arrangements are well documented and procedures are robust. Staff and governors have received training and staff are well versed in how to keep children safe. Rigorous checks are completed on all new staff and regular visitors to the school and leaders ensure that records are kept up to date. Where children are at risk, policies are closely adhered to and the school engages well with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The teaching at Leigh Primary is characterised by well-prepared and well-organised lessons that have a strong sense of purpose. Teachers ensure that pupils are clear about their tasks and they check regularly during lessons that pupils are focused on their work. The pupils are often given opportunities to discuss and develop their ideas with each other and they enjoy this active participation.
- Classrooms are bright and colourful with thought-provoking displays celebrating pupils' work. Additional guidance to support pupils' learning is also imaginatively displayed so as to capture their interest and assist pupils in learning. Senior leaders' expectations about display are consistently applied by teachers and this means that pupils know what is expected of them. For example, a display entitled 'reach for the stars' is visible in every classroom and helps motivate pupils to do their best. English and mathematics 'learning walls' show the work in which the pupils are currently engaged and teachers often refer to these when exemplifying teaching points.
- Teachers consistently provide pupils with work at different levels of challenge and complexity. They give pupils an element of choice about some of the tasks they undertake, while ensuring that there is a good match between activities and pupils' abilities. Teachers are skilled at knowing what pupils can already do and ensure that new learning builds on this. Teaching and support staff monitor closely the work chosen by pupils to ensure the appropriateness of their choices. Pupils commented that they enjoyed this opportunity and over time it has encouraged them 'to go for the higher challenge'.
- The development of reading and writing skills is given a high priority in the school. Pupils have regular opportunities to read and they keep careful logs of the books they have read. Younger pupils commented that family members regularly listen to them read at home. Pupils who fall behind with their reading are identified early and are provided with effective one-to-one support by a teaching assistant. The profile of writing has been raised since the time of the last inspection, including through more opportunities for pupils to write at length for different purposes. The quality of pupils' handwriting is good, as is the general presentation of pupils' work.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books shows that they have lots of opportunities to practise their calculation skills and develop their mathematical reasoning when solving problems. There is a high work rate evident in pupils' books and tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. The pupils enjoy mathematics even when tasks challenge them, as shown in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where pupils were using compasses and rulers to draw and measure the radius and circumference of circles. There was a sense of fun in completing the tasks and the teacher allowed pupils to learn from each other by 'phoning a friend' to seek help from a partner in class.

- Teachers' questioning skills vary in their effectiveness. Some questioning skilfully assesses what pupils understand and then helps pupils to deepen their thinking. For example, following a pupil's response, some teachers probe more deeply by asking questions such as 'Who can add to that answer?' and 'Can you tell me a little bit more?' Similarly, where questioning is productive, staff encourage those pupils who appear a little reluctant to offer a response at first by asking them for a view. By contrast, some questioning is less effective and pupils' progress slows where questions are only answered by volunteers or there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to explain their ideas.
- Teachers make frequent assessments of the pupils' progress and use their findings to identify any dips in performance. They adjust their teaching plans accordingly so that gaps in pupils' understanding are plugged. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning; they are directed well by teachers and are clear about their roles. On occasions, however, they do not use questioning well enough to allow pupils to think for themselves.
- Teachers mark pupils' work very conscientiously, in line with the school's policy. They praise what the pupils have done well and sometimes provide guidance to help them to improve their work further. However, not all teachers follow the school's marking policy closely enough to ensure that pupils improve their work.
- Some pupils are not clear about where their strengths lie in subjects and which aspects they need to work on to improve. They are a little vague when talking about what they are good at and what their targets for improvement are or what their next steps in their learning might be.

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 with whom inspectors spoke commented that they feel safe in school and they enjoy their lessons. They regard school as a caring place, as illustrated by one pupil who said, 'Our teachers look after us and help us when we get stuck'. Pupils also spoke about their awareness of keeping safe when using the internet.
- Leaders have ensured that staff and governors are effectively trained to help keep pupils safe. The school has well-considered policies in place which are adhered to by staff; consequently, the school is a safe environment. All adults, including visitors, are vetted as being suitable to work with children. Information relating to safeguarding is recorded rigorously. The acting headteacher has strengthened further the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that bullying is very rare and when it does happen it tends to be name-calling, which staff deal with quickly and effectively. Pupils' knowledge of different kinds of bullying is strong, because the curriculum includes much work on promoting good relationships and nurturing pupils' positive attitudes towards each other. They are taught about different forms of bullying, such as racism and around school there are several displays promoting respect and tolerance for all.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the school's improved attendance figures. Pupils are courteous and will hold open doors for each other and adults. Behaviour at the breakfast club and in the dining hall at lunchtime is good and clear routines ensure that social times run smoothly.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The behaviour policy is consistently applied by all members of staff and the consequences of poor behaviour are well known by the pupils, along with the rewards for good behaviour. There are prompts and displays in classrooms and throughout the school to encourage good behaviour. Pupils enjoy gaining reward points for their good behaviour.
- In all classes, around the school and outside on the playground, inspectors witnessed very positive behaviour. There have been a few fixed-term exclusions of pupils from school following instances of inappropriate behaviour but these are rare occurrences and the circumstances are well documented.
- The school council meets regularly with senior leaders to discuss how things might improve in school. These discussions have included behaviour and ways to strengthen it even further.

- Leaders have worked very hard to improve attendance by revamping the systems used to manage, encourage and celebrate attendance. The school breakfast club has helped to boost pupils' attendance, together with additional and interesting activities such as creative artwork. Attendance is now similar to the national average and the number of pupils who regularly miss school has reduced each year over the past three years. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved and is in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Senior leaders and governors have focused a lot of their attention and resources on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in school. As a result, pupils' overall achievement across the school has improved and their outcomes are good.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the national screening check for phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) at the end of Year 1 has improved from well below the national average in 2013 (34%) to above average in 2015, when 85% of pupils reached the expected standard. By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils with a secure grasp of phonics is higher than the national figure. Pupils' reading skills, including those of lower-ability pupils, are developing well.
- Assessments at the end of key stage 1 in 2015 showed a slight improvement on previous years' performance. Most pupils achieved the expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment was similar to the national average. From their low starting points, few pupils do better than the national expectation. The school is expecting achievement in all subjects in 2016 to be at least as strong as last year. This confidence is supported by inspection evidence.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2015, pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling was higher than in previous years. Results are now closer to national averages and in English grammar, punctuation and spelling the school's results were above the national average in 2015. Pupils made good progress to achieve these results. The school's assessment records show an improved profile of achievement over time and the school is predicting results in 2016 to be at least as good as last year. Inspection evidence from lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' books and discussion with pupils about their work, indicates that the school's expectations are realistic. This indicates good progress over time, particularly when considering approximately a third of pupils enter key stage 1 with delayed language, writing, number and social skills.
- The school has improved its effectiveness in ensuring that most groups of pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs or disability, the disadvantaged and pupils who speak English as an additional language, achieve well over time. In 2015, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was similar to that of their peers in school and other pupils nationally. Current school records indicate that disadvantaged pupils across the school are continuing to make good progress.
- The most able pupils made at least the progress expected of them in reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and mathematics in 2015, but their progress was less strong in writing. In the 2015 national tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was below that of other pupils nationally but significantly improved when compared to previous years in all subject areas. However, in specifically grammar, punctuation and spelling, the proportion of most-able pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was higher than the national average.

Early years provision

is good

- The children entering the Nursery class have a broad span of knowledge and skills but, overall, these are much lower than those typically found. Many children arrive with limited experience of the English language. Children make a positive start in the Nursery class, settling in quickly to its routines and activities. The Nursery setting is colourful, vibrant and staff are welcoming. The children are happy and enjoy learning and exploring the many opportunities provided for them.
- Due to effective teaching and learning and a well-resourced and vibrant setting, children in the early years make good progress. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved since the time of the last inspection and in 2015 it was 64%, which was similar to the national average. The school's own assessment data indicates that the percentage of children achieving a good level of development this year will be slightly higher than last year.

- A particular strength of the early years department is the high quality of outdoor provision. This is very effective in developing the children's confidence in using different play equipment and learning resources, which, in turn, helps to stimulate language and enhance their verbal communication skills. There are lots of imaginative and exciting activities designed to encourage the children to explore and find things out for themselves.
- The two Reception classes share a large teaching space and the teachers and support staff combine and work very well together. Resources are good and, as with the Nursery, the Reception classes have their own dedicated outdoor education space. This area is used well and imaginatively by teachers to structure and focus the children's learning in readiness for their transfer to key stage 1. Teaching in the early years is good; it builds on children's interests and helps to develop their love of learning. The children love working with letters and the sounds that they make and teachers modelling of phonics work is highly effective. As a result of effective and well-planned teaching, all children make good progress.
- Expectations of behaviour are high and adults help children to understand the importance of treating one another politely and with respect. As a consequence, children's behaviour is good. Children share resources and play and learn together harmoniously. They are effectively supervised by staff, who ensure that they are kept secure and safe while not hampering their imaginative play. Teaching promotes the importance of children listening carefully when information or instructions are being provided.
- The early years manager leads the provision well. She uses accurate and regular assessments to track children's progress and ensure that teaching activities are planned to address any gaps in learning. The proportion of children who are expected to achieve a good level of development in 2016 reflects a three-year pattern of continuous improvement.
- Parents are kept well informed about how well their children are doing. Parents spoken with, who have children attending the Nursery and Reception classes, were very appreciative of the staff and how they help their children to progress both in their learning and socially.

School details

Unique reference number	106225
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10012173

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	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Shawdale
Headteacher	Janet Haseldine
Telephone number	0161 3683366
Website	www.leigh.tameside.sch.uk
Email address	admin@leigh.tameside.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, of which the largest group is Bangladeshi.
- Pupils are taught in either single-year or mixed-year classes.
- Over half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been some changes to staffing and governance since the previous inspection.
- A breakfast club is provided by the school.
- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The headteacher was not present during the inspection due to illness. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher.
- The chair of the governing body was unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances and the vice-chair of the governing body was acting as chairperson.
- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes and in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school, including break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and in 'learning journals' in the early years.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the inclusion manager, subject leaders and the acting chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2 discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils in the playground and in lessons.
- Inspectors considered responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were too few responses to Parent View to enable inspectors' analysis. Inspectors also spoke with parents informally before and after school. The lead inspector had meetings with two parents at their request.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documents, including minutes from meetings of the governing body, information on pupils' outcomes, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its improvement planning. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

John Gornall, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Gregory	Ofsted Inspector

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