

# St Leonard's Primary School

St Leonard's Avenue, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 4LT

## Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Groups of pupils are making variable rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching and learning remains inconsistent across year groups.
- Groups of pupils, such as girls when compared to boys and disadvantaged pupils, are making progress which remains too variable in several year groups.
- Learning tasks are not routinely matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs. Pupils, especially the most able, are not consistently challenged sufficiently in lessons.
- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of all groups of pupils effectively enough.
- Teachers are not consistently applying the school's expectations for feedback and presentation of pupils' work. Untidy work is accepted too often.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in a range of other subjects.
- Some curriculum leaders are not robustly or rigorously monitoring learning in subjects for which they are responsible.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress do not help school leaders and managers understand fully how well groups of pupils are making progress in their learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders have exceptionally high expectations of staff and pupils alike.
- Many initiatives have been put in place by leaders and managers, which are beginning to impact positively on teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Many more pupils are well on track to reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics than in 2016.
- Despite changes to staffing in the early years, the provision is well led. It is meeting the needs of children effectively.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered around school. They are helped well in their learning by caring and supportive staff.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen the consistency of teaching to further accelerate the progress that groups of pupils are making in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring a more careful matching of learning tasks to pupils' individual needs to provide greater challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able
  - diminishing the remaining differences in rates of progress between girls and boys
  - strengthening the impact of teaching on disadvantaged pupils
  - ensuring that all teachers fully apply school expectations on feedback to pupils and the presentation of pupils' work
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in subjects across the wider curriculum.
- Intensify the impact leaders and managers are having on pupils' learning by:
  - increasing the regularity, rigour and robustness of monitoring by curriculum leaders
  - developing a more accurate system for tracking pupils' progress so that leaders have a clearer understanding of the rates of progress groups of pupils are making
  - evolving curriculum provision so that it more effectively meets the needs of all groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Senior leaders, appointed since the previous inspection, have put in place many initiatives which have not yet eliminated the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. This is resulting in groups of pupils in several classes making variable rates of progress in their learning.
- Plans made to rigorously monitor teaching and learning in key subjects this school year were not followed through robustly enough. Staff absence and support for weaker teachers became a higher priority. This lack of rigorous, regular and relentless monitoring interrupted the rate of school improvement.
- The tracking system used by school leaders is not fully effective. It does not give leaders and managers precise enough information about the rates of progress that specific groups of pupils are currently making. This is hindering leaders' ability to act swiftly to ensure that all groups of pupils are making sufficient progress.
- The senior leadership team, formed since the previous inspection, is strong and visionary. Many initiatives have been put in place to strengthen teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. These initiatives are beginning to have an impact. However, they require more time to become embedded to strengthen consistency across the school.
- Senior leaders, curriculum leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have robust plans for tackling the remaining weaknesses in teaching to improve pupils' achievement across the school.
- The curriculum is diverse and creative. It is enriched well by the many opportunities to participate in clubs outside of the school day and by visitors to the school. The curriculum is not, however, meeting the needs of all groups of pupils sufficiently to diminish differences in learning and progress, for example between girls and boys. School leaders are seeking to improve curriculum provision further to improve pupils' achievement across all subjects.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is spent wisely. Thus, differences between their performance and that of other pupils nationally are reducing. However, there is still some variability in their outcomes across different classes.
- Support provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities through additional funding is helping many of them to make similar rates of progress to other pupils. This is an improvement.
- A wide range of sporting opportunities are provided for pupils from the additional sports funding. School leaders and governors wisely ensured that staff received specialised sports training so that they can now provide enhanced sporting opportunities for pupils.
- Staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities which are helping them to become better teachers. More professional development opportunities are planned to bring about further improvements in teaching. The performance of staff is tightly managed through robust processes.
- British values are effectively taught. Pupils are provided with practical opportunities to

learn about democracy. Recently, elections were held for safeguarding champions after candidates produced manifestos in the same way that political parties do.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is a strength. The governing body is effectively led by a newly appointed chair, who is steering the group effectively.
- Governors challenge senior leaders strongly over any underperformance of pupils. They have been decisive in strengthening school performance since the previous inspection.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They are giving clear strategic leadership. This is helping school leaders to bring about improvement.
- Governors, while recognising the improvements, have a strong grasp of what they must do to further improve the achievement of groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils, girls and boys.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A secure culture of safeguarding is central to life at school. Regular training is undertaken by staff, ensuring that they are up to date with all the latest requirements.
- Rigorous safeguarding checks are carried out on employees before they begin working at the school. Records of these checks are maintained meticulously to ensure that nobody slips through the net.
- Safeguarding champions elected by their fellow pupils carry additional responsibility for identifying any concerns on the playground and around the school. Any identified concerns are passed on to senior members of staff with responsibility for safeguarding, who deal with them appropriately.
- The school works effectively with parents and a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

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

## **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching remains inconsistent. Pupils' books and the latest school performance information show that rates of progress remain variable in several year groups because of these inconsistencies.
- Pupils' books from a wide range of subjects show that the school's expectations about the presentation of pupils' work are not being consistently applied. Teachers do not give sufficiently clear guidance and insist that pupils take enough care in how they present their work. As a result, too much work is untidy and lacks precision.
- Learning tasks are not routinely matched carefully enough to pupils' needs. Groups of pupils, such as the most able, are not challenged sufficiently in some lessons.
- Topic and science books show that pupils have many opportunities to use their writing skills in a range of subjects. There are too few opportunities provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.

- Many teachers have strong subject knowledge. This is used effectively to secure effective learning.
- In several classes, information communication technology is used well to support learning. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching assistants work successfully with teachers to effectively support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in classes and in small groups.
- In many lessons, teaching is well organised and structured to build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge.
- Many teachers use questioning skilfully to help them understand how effectively their teaching is extending learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well cared for in a nurturing and supportive learning environment. This is helping vulnerable pupils, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, in their learning. They are beginning to make faster rates of progress.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils report that they feel safe in school because of all the security measures that are in place.
- Pupils are given many creative opportunities to reflect on important issues in society. Recently, during 'homeless week' in school, pupils discussed what they could do to help homeless people. This issue was highlighted and promoted much debate when a shelter for homeless people was erected in the playground.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to have their say on what they are learning about in lessons. This is helping to boost their self-esteem effectively.
- The effectively run before- and after-school clubs are well attended. The before-school club gives pupils a good start to the day and helps prepare them well for the lessons ahead. The after-school clubs provide a multitude of activities from which pupils benefit.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Around school, pupils are polite and well mannered. They hold doors open for each other and for adults. Inspectors saw no running in corridors. Pupils greet each other with cheery smiles.
- Pupils enjoy attending school regularly and meeting their friends. Pupils' attendance is above average.
- On the playground, there is a clear sense of order and pupils having fun. Pupils are mindful of the feelings of others. One pupil explained to an inspector that he would not leave a fellow pupil on the playground on their own. Instead he would go and play with them as a friend.

- Pupils report that bullying does not take place very often. When it does, pupils report that it is resolved rapidly and to their satisfaction.
- Occasionally, pupils do not listen as attentively as they might to teachers in a few lessons. Some pupils do not take enough pride in their books so their work is poorly presented. A few teachers accept this poor presentation instead of challenging it.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Groups of pupils are making variable rates of progress in a range of subjects from their individual starting points because of the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- In 2016, pupils' progress was poor at the end of Year 6 because of a legacy of weak teaching. The latest school performance information and work in pupils' books show that this is no longer the case.
- Some differences exist in rates of progress made by girls compared to boys in reading, writing and mathematics. These differences are now much smaller than they were in 2016.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils remains slightly variable. In some classes, disadvantaged pupils are making more progress in their learning than other pupils. In other classes, disadvantaged pupils are making less progress than other pupils. The achievement differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing. The spending of the pupil premium is impacting effectively on this.
- Most-able pupils are not routinely challenged as much as they might be in all classes. Therefore, their progress is not consistently strong across the school.
- The progress which those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making is accelerating because of effective teaching.
- Many more pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics than was previously the case because of more effective teaching in most classes.
- Pupils are taught to read well. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check is above the national average.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Children get off to a flying start to their learning and development in Nursery and Reception, which prepares them well for their future education. They are effectively taught.
- Early years is well led and managed, despite the changes to leadership of the provision during the past school year. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development has been maintained well by the school.
- Children are well supported in their learning. The Nursery and Reception are well organised. Children are encouraged to persevere and concentrate when learning, which builds their resilience as learners. There is much autonomy given to children to

empower their own learning.

- The large majority of children leaving Reception are well prepared to start Year 1 because adults take every opportunity to reinforce their learning in the early years.
- Teachers and other adults effectively promote children's understanding and use of phonics through an exciting range of learning and development opportunities.
- Children socialise well. They take turns to participate in learning tasks.
- The views of children are proactively sought when deciding on topics, which helps stimulate their learning. Child-initiated work is highly valued by adults.
- Children are happy and well settled. They enjoy their learning in a purposeful, bright and stimulating classroom and outdoor area.
- Parents speak glowingly about the good start their children get to their learning because the school works so closely with the parents.
- Disadvantaged children are making similar rates of progress to other children because of the careful spending of the pupil premium.
- Learning through exploration is not consistently supported well enough by adults to enable children to be completely successful in achieving the best outcomes.

## School details

Unique reference number	124199
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10032569

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Stacey
Headteacher	Helen Spearing
Telephone number	01785 356 890
Website	<a href="http://www.st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk">www.st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk">office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 May 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.



- The school met the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Early years provision is part-time in the Nursery and full-time in the Reception class.
- The school runs before- and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher took up post on 1 September 2015. The deputy headteacher took up post on 1 September 2016. There have also been many other changes to staffing since the previous inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and English subject leader.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, school staff and the chair of the governing body, plus two other governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons, during breaks and lunchtimes. They also spoke with parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised the pupils' work during lessons and work produced over time in a wide range of their books. They also listened to a small number of pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 reading.
- Inspectors closely observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school performance information showing the progress pupils currently in school are making.
- Other documentation scrutinised included plans for school improvement, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 74 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 73 free-text responses from parents, 27 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Aileen King

Ofsted Inspector

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