

Littlemoor Primary School

Littlemoor Lane, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL4 2RR

Inspection dates

25–26 September 2018

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not maintained a good quality of education for pupils. Since the last inspection, many pupils have moved on to secondary school without the skills that they need in English and mathematics.
- Subject leaders of the wider curriculum do not have enough influence on the quality of teaching. As a result, learning lacks depth and pupils are unable to develop subject-specific knowledge and skills.
- Pupils' progress falters in some year groups. This is because some teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Weaknesses over time in the overall quality of teaching mean that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This is especially the case in writing.
- Some teachers do not use information about pupils' prior knowledge to plan learning that challenges pupils.
- Some teachers do not plan learning that meets the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- In the early years, some children are not prepared well enough for Year 1. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- A small minority of pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour. Some staff and leaders do not manage this effectively.
- Leaders have been unsuccessful in securing sufficient improvements in pupils' overall rates of attendance.

The school has the following strengths

- Following a challenging period of decline, standards at the school are turning a corner, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils feel safe. Leaders and staff work well with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate help and support.
- Senior leaders know their school well. They are keen to ensure that the school benefits from external support. This is having a positive effect on outcomes for pupils.
- Governors provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support. They effectively hold leaders to account for their actions.
- The subject leaders for mathematics and reading have been able to secure sustained improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are polite and friendly. They want to do well at school and they demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders check that systems put in place to improve pupils' attendance are effective in order to reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school
 - staff have confidence in the systems to manage the challenging behaviour of a very small proportion of pupils
 - subject leaders have the skills, knowledge and support to be able to improve the quality of teaching in their own subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - the high expectations that some teachers have of pupils are reflected across the school
 - teachers use accurate assessment information to challenge pupils
 - teachers plan learning that builds on pupils' prior knowledge and deepens their learning, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - the teaching of writing allows pupils to develop their technical skills and apply their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills
 - teachers plan learning that meets the needs of those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Further improve outcomes for pupils, but particularly in writing, by ensuring that gaps in pupils' learning are filled.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that:
 - a higher proportion of children are ready for the challenges of Year 1, particularly disadvantaged children, boys and those children who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - adults use assessment information accurately to shape learning so that it better meets the needs of children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have been supported well by the local authority through a difficult period of instability. Despite challenges, leaders continue to set high expectations for staff. Leaders are determined to secure long-term improvements to the overall quality of teaching. For example, newly appointed staff receive appropriate training and support.
- Many staff enjoy working at the school and they feel that leaders are supportive of their well-being. However, some staff expressed concerns about leaders' systems to manage the behaviour of a very small proportion of pupils. Leaders have been unsuccessful in reducing the proportion of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period.
- Following more recent, permanent appointments, staffing arrangements are beginning to stabilise; senior leaders have acted to strengthen middle leadership. Consequently, the quality of teaching in some subjects is improving markedly. As a result, there have been sustained improvements in pupils' attainment and progress across the school. This is particularly the case in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders understand that weaknesses in the quality of teaching have taken their toll on pupils' achievement. Leaders know their school well. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Following effective support from a multi-academy trust, brokered by the local authority, leaders have a robust plan to bring about improvements.
- Leaders ensure that those teachers who are new to the profession access appropriate training and support. This allows them to develop professionally and improve their practice.
- Some leaders make a highly positive and valuable contribution. For example, the subject leader for English has championed reading successfully. This is improving outcomes for pupils. Similarly, the subject leader for mathematics has secured improvements in the quality of teaching in this subject. As a result, pupils make better progress in mathematics. This is particularly the case at key stage 2.
- The leader for SEN ensures that those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are identified quickly. These pupils receive appropriate help and support. Nonetheless, some teachers do not pay enough attention to the specific learning needs of individual pupils. As a result, the progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities varies from one year to the next.
- Leaders ensure that staff work to improve pupils' rates of attendance. Staff have put several strategies in place to support parents and carers to improve their children's attendance. This is starting to have a positive effect. However, leaders have not been successful in reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school. Leaders are unclear about which of their strategies to improve attendance are working well.
- Leaders have used additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the differences in the progress made by this group of pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing. However, because of weaknesses in the overall quality of

teaching, over time, these pupils are unable to make the progress of which they are capable.

- Leaders have a strong rationale for the curriculum. They ensure that pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders endeavour to provide pupils with a multitude of experiences to teach them about the wider world. Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Although they are enthusiastic and committed, many subject leaders are new to their role. Some subject leaders lack the required expertise and support from senior leaders. This is preventing them from improving the quality of teaching in their subjects. There has been an overarching focus on improving the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. Teaching across the wider curriculum does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop subject-specific skills.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the governing body. Governors have a strong understanding of the school's context and the changes within the local community in recent years.
- Governors are firmly supportive of leaders and they remain ambitious for all pupils. They are realistic about how their school compares to others. For instance, they are aware that the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is higher than the national average.
- Governors are very clear about which aspects of the school require further improvement. For example, they are aware that pupils do not make consistently good progress in their writing at key stage 2.
- Following effective support from the local authority, an invigorated and strengthened governing body is now holding leaders to account for their actions effectively. Governors bring to their roles highly relevant knowledge and expertise from a wide range of sectors. They use their skills to ask pertinent questions and they challenge leaders about all aspects of the school's performance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff work to ensure that pupils are safe from harm. Leaders foster highly effective links with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families can access support.
- Leaders ensure that through the wider curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils understand how to stay safe online.
- There are systems in place to ensure that adults who work at the school are safe to work with children. Leaders ensure that staff receive safeguarding training. As a result, staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. Staff act quickly on any concerns they have about a pupil's well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- In recent years, there have been some improvements in the quality of teaching. This is having a positive effect on pupils' overall progress. However, in the past, opportunities for pupils to make good progress have been too dependent on which class they belonged to.
- Wide gaps have emerged in some pupils' knowledge. This is particularly evident in pupils' writing. For example, some pupils in Year 5 are unable to apply basic punctuation and grammar skills in their writing. Some teachers do not plan learning to address these gaps. In contrast, other teachers work effectively to identify and address the shortcomings in pupils' writing skills.
- There are times when pupils get the opportunity to benefit from strong teaching and teachers' high expectations. Teachers use their subject knowledge and their secure grasp of the national curriculum to plan learning that challenges pupils. Teachers reshape their explanations to help pupils to overcome misconceptions. Nonetheless, this positive picture is not reflected across the school.
- On the whole, teachers quickly foster supportive relationships with pupils. This means that pupils are confident enough to ask for help if they fall behind.
- On occasion, teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are not high enough. This is because some teachers do not use accurate assessment information to plan learning. As a result, pupils are unable to build on their prior knowledge and they complete work that lacks challenge. For example, work in pupils' books shows that there are times when pupils complete work that is too easy for them.
- Some teachers do not pay enough attention to pupils' learning needs. This is especially the case for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- A combination of permanent staff appointments, training for staff and external support is beginning to address the inconsistencies in teaching. For example, more recently, pupils have enjoyed more opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and develop their reasoning skills.
- Pupils' books across the wider curriculum show that they do not get enough opportunities to develop their subject-specific skills. Teachers' determination to raise pupils' attainment in reading and writing has resulted in some other subjects, such as history, being dominated by literacy-based tasks.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. On the whole, pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. They are keen to do well; they listen carefully during learning and they take pride in their work.
- There are effective procedures to keep pupils safe. For example, there are high levels of staff supervision around the school during social times. As a result, pupils report that

they feel safe in school. They are confident that any harmful name-calling is dealt with by teachers.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils talked intelligently about how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils across the school learn about how to stay safe on the roads. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the dangers of swimming in open water.
- Pupils report that bullying is a rare occurrence. They trust the adults in school to act and address any behaviour that is causing pupils to feel unhappy. Incidents of racist and homophobic name-calling are extremely rare.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive appropriate support, particularly those pupils who lack confidence. There are a wide range of initiatives in place to develop pupils' confidence and resilience. The pastoral support provided by staff is a strength of the school. Pupils are treated as individuals and they receive the emotional support that they need.
- As part of the religious education curriculum, pupils learn about other faiths such as Sikhism and Hinduism. Hence, pupils understand that it is wrong to single out others who may have different religious beliefs or have different colour skin. Pupils learn about and understand the dangers of radical and extreme views.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The overwhelming majority of pupils conduct themselves very well. They are friendly, polite and they show respect for their peers, their teachers and other adults who work at the school.
- However, leaders' behaviour records show that there is a very small proportion of pupils who, on occasion, struggle to manage their behaviour. Many of these pupils face difficult circumstances outside school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive help and support with their behaviour. This is starting to have a positive effect. Nonetheless, the proportion of pupils excluded for a fixed period is above the national average.
- Leaders only use exclusion from school for a fixed period as a last resort. They also take steps to ensure that vulnerable pupils are safe during their time away from the school.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is well above the national average. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress and attainment declined following the previous inspection. This was especially the case in mathematics. Pupils' progress in mathematics at key stage 2 was in the bottom 20% nationally for three years. As a result, in recent years, too many pupils have gone on to secondary school without the skills they need to make a good start at secondary school.

- However, improvements in the overall quality of teaching mean that pupils' progress and attainment are on an upward trajectory. Provisional key stage 2 results in 2018, confirmed by work in pupils' books, show that leaders have taken effective action to improve outcomes for pupils in some subjects. This is particularly the case in mathematics. This is because of overall improvements in the quality of teaching in this subject. For example, pupils have more opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and develop their reasoning skills.
- There have also been some positive developments in the overall quality of teaching at key stage 1. Hence, since 2016, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 has improved year after year.
- Despite considerable improvements, current pupils' progress in different year groups at the school remains uneven. In some year groups, pupils are unable to move forward, and wide gaps emerge in their knowledge.
- There are periods where pupils' progress over time, particularly in writing, is not good enough. Work in books shows that some pupils, especially at key stage 2, are not developing into skilled writers because of large gaps in their knowledge. For example, weaknesses in their grammar and punctuation hold them back.
- Pupils who benefit from stronger teaching typically achieve better. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders use additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the differences between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally are diminishing. Although improving, the chance for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to benefit from good teaching remains a lottery. Some teachers are not planning learning that meets the needs of this group of pupils.
- Pupils are relishing greater success in their reading. Opportunities for them to build on their comprehension skills allow pupils to read with enjoyment. Leaders' effective work to secure improvements in phonics means that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Pupils enjoy a broad range of subjects in the wider curriculum. However, given the weaknesses in pupils' writing, teachers focus heavily on the development of this aspect of learning. This comes at the cost of opportunities to apply and develop pupils' subject-specific skills. As a result, pupils are unable to deepen their learning in other subjects.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The leader of the early years knows the children and their needs well. However, some adults in the early years do not have a precise understanding of children's prior learning.
- There are times when planned activities are not shaped effectively by adults to meet the needs of children. For example, on occasion, some adults do not ask good-quality questions that develop children's language and vocabulary further.
- Relationships between adults and children are positive. Children behave well in the early years and they are engaged in their learning. Children benefit from clear and

well-established routines and a calm, bright and well-organised learning environment. They enjoy a range of activities to develop their motor skills as well as opportunities to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Over half of the children who enter Nursery and Reception have skills that are below those typically associated with their age. Many children struggle with their language and communication skills. A high proportion of children struggle with their personal, social and emotional needs.
- The leader of the early years is beginning to identify children's barriers to learning and ensure that children benefit from bespoke support. For example, some children benefit from tailored support with their speech and language. However, it is too early to determine whether this extra help and support is having a positive effect on the progress that children make.
- As a result of improvements in leadership and the overall quality of teaching, a higher proportion of children achieve a good level development at the end of Reception. However, some pupils still do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for boys, disadvantaged children and those children who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The leader of early years has a strong understanding of children's skills when they arrive in Nursery and Reception. Strong links with other nursery settings as well as home visits mean that children settle quickly. Parents benefit from frequent contact with staff; they can ask questions about their children's education. Parents are encouraged to support and contribute to their children's learning.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff have had appropriate safeguarding training. They are aware of the procedures that are in place to report any welfare concerns they have about a child.

School details

Unique reference number	105642
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10042464

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs K Knox
Headteacher	Mrs C Kelly
Telephone number	0161 624 4188
Website	www.littlemoor.oldham.sch.uk/
Email address	info@littlemoor.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2014

Information about this school

- Littlemoor Primary School is larger than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, one fifth of all pupils, is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- In the last four years, there have been several changes to staffing at the school and a number of changes to the governing body.
- Since the last inspection, the school has received support from the local authority. A multi-academy trust is also providing support. This has been brokered through the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school. They scrutinised pupils' work across year groups and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the headteacher and middle leaders. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority and a representative from a multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors examined a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding documentation and leaders' self-evaluation. The lead inspector considered minutes of governing body meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- The lead inspector considered the views of three parents who expressed their views via text message to Ofsted.
- Inspectors checked the content on the school website. They also took account of the 11 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Emma Gregory, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Debra Meekings	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Burrow	Ofsted Inspector

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