

Leigh St John's CofE Primary

Kirkhall Lane, Leigh, Greater Manchester WN7 1RY

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The ambitious headteacher and deputy headteachers work skilfully with the governing body, to achieve the school's vision for pupils to 'learn today for a brighter tomorrow'.
- Senior and subject leaders work ably in and beyond their school. They have ensured that the infant school has made a seamless change to become a primary school.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite and orderly. They relate very well to others and support each other's learning in the classroom.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) enables them to thrive. Pupils discuss and debate their learning with great enthusiasm and understanding.
- Staff are thoughtful and reflective in the way that they teach. Their determined action to develop their practice has been highly effective.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad, balanced, well structured and engaging for pupils.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. Pupils in key stage 2 make strong progress across subjects.
- The early years is led skilfully and very successfully. Children make excellent progress and are exceptionally well prepared for their move to Year 1.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the work of leaders and teachers. Regular communication from the school regarding pupils' learning across the curriculum enables parents to understand the progress that their children make.
- Many pupils attend and benefit from a rich and varied range of extra-curricular activities. When leaders design these activities, they consult pupils for their views.
- Pupils read very well. The proportion of pupils who attain the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 is above the national average.
- Leaders' and teachers' actions to improve the performance of boys are bringing about significant improvement. However, boys' outcomes are not as strong as for girls.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) does not match that of other pupils with the same starting points. However, the difference is diminishing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop teaching, so that:
 - the difference between the progress of boys and girls diminishes even further
 - the progress of pupils with SEND matches more closely that of other pupils with the same starting points.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are ambitious for all staff and pupils to flourish and achieve their very best. The school has a culture of high expectations. Leaders have a clear strategic vision to develop and improve the school further. Together, these strengths have led to great success in developing the school's new key stage 2 provision.
- The work of the school benefits significantly from a wide range of strengths across the senior leadership team. Additionally, the leadership of subjects, particularly of mathematics, English and physical education (PE) is exceptional. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including boys who have historically shown some disengagement in their learning, now experience a curriculum that is planned, designed and taught very well. Leaders and staff enrich pupils' learning through a wide range of additional experiences.
- Leaders have established strong and effective systems to enable staff to share their skills to support the work of other schools. Leaders make certain that staff benefit from learning from the good practice of others. This work has been particularly beneficial as the school moves from infant to full primary school provision. The new provision in key stage 2 matches the high standards seen in key stage 1.
- Leaders and staff provide many extra-curricular activities for pupils each week, including a broad range of sports. Activities specifically requested by pupils include a hairdressing club, cooking and Egyptian dancing. The take-up of extra-curricular activities is exceptionally high, reflecting the pupils' interest and enjoyment in them.
- The care and well-being of pupils is at the heart of this successful school. The promotion of SMSC and British values is central to pupils' learning. Leaders ensure that, throughout the curriculum, pupils consider many aspects of SMSC. Pupils have admirable views on diversity. They speak with conviction about respect and tolerance of those who are different from themselves. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders engage parents very well in their children's learning. For example, an electronic system to record aspects of pupils' lessons in media form is provided to parents. This enables parents to share in their children's achievements and to understand how they learn. Parents speak very highly of the school. All parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that they would recommend the school to other parents.
- Leaders use PE and sports funding competently to provide pupils with a broad range of sporting activities. The leader for PE ensures, for example, that staff make effective external links with other schools and organisations. As a result, pupils in the new key stage 2 department participate in sporting events beyond Leigh St Johns.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium wisely to support disadvantaged pupils' learning and development. Pupils receive additional support during and beyond lesson time in activities such as the school's book club. Such support has a substantial and sustained impact on the learning and the progress of eligible pupils.

- Leaders for SEND ensure that additional funding is used effectively to promote pupils' learning. Additionally, leaders' systems are being fine-tuned to aid teachers in developing the provision for these pupils. For example, pupils are now given the opportunity to evaluate their own progress. Pupils with SEND make strong progress in their learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors work in a highly strategic manner to ensure that they provide leaders with the support and challenge that they need to develop the school further.
- The chair of governors is skilled at analysing pupil performance information. This work has been highly beneficial in ensuring that all governors share a clear picture of the school's many academic strengths and areas for further development. The governor responsible for safeguarding uses her knowledge and broad experience in this area to check that leaders and staff keep pupils safe.
- Governors engage very effectively with subject leaders to provide a high level of challenge. Their knowledge of curriculum development is enhanced by the detailed information provided to them by subject leaders, for instance in relation to the development of the new key stage 2 provision.
- The vice-chair of governors, who is also the vicar for the parish, works successfully with leaders to promote pupils' pastoral needs and spirituality in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school site is secure. All visitors receive detailed safeguarding information when they arrive at school, ensuring that they are clear about procedures to keep both adults and children safe.
- The school's pastoral manager is highly effective in providing targeted support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The sanctuary of the school's nurture room is highly valued by pupils. They see it as a place where they receive support and guidance during difficult times in their lives.
- Staff help pupils to understand how to stay safe in a range of situations, both in the real world and online.
- Leaders carry out appropriate checks to assure themselves of the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff and governors undertake regular safeguarding training, so that pupils receive effective support and guidance.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire said that they felt their children are safe, well looked after and happy in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about teaching and learning. They benefit from high-quality professional development. This ensures that they have the knowledge and understanding that they need to develop pupils' learning further.
- Teachers in the new key stage 2 classes have effective links with teachers from other

schools. They regularly debate the way that they teach, sharing and learning from models of excellence. This approach ensures that teachers provide pupils with a challenging and enriching curriculum, as strong as that in key stage 1 and early years. Teachers are proud of these links. They value learning from others, as well as sharing aspects of their own very strong practice beyond the school.

- The teaching of reading is impressive across the school. Pupils have a deep understanding and appreciation of the books that they read. The school runs a book club each lunchtime. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to share high-quality literature and fine-tune their reading skills. Pupils are engaged and excited by their reading. Younger pupils use a range of phonic skills skilfully to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils use strategies such as inference and deduction when discussing their books.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to ensure that the teaching of writing interests and excites pupils. Teachers' new approach to the teaching of this subject is ensuring that pupils make strong progress. Staff skilfully teach pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects such as history, science and geography.
- Teachers have received recent training in the teaching of mathematics. They make excellent use of their improved knowledge to ensure that pupils are proficient in applying their mathematical skills when undertaking problem-solving. Following a whole-school focus by staff, pupils use a rich mathematical vocabulary to reason orally and on paper about the work that they do. For example, in a key stage 2 class, pupils explained their strategies for adding fractions together with mixed denominators. Pupils benefit greatly from opportunities to apply their learning in mathematics to other subjects such as science and geography.
- Pupils respond extremely positively in lessons when working alone and in groups. Pupils who spoke with inspectors demonstrated an outstanding understanding of, and interest in, their learning across subjects. For example, a group of pupils from Year 5 spoke with great interest about reproduction in plants, linking their learning to aspects of human reproduction. Pupils love the challenge of learning and they want to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers are successfully resolving the historical lower performance of boys compared to that of girls in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff use assessment information systematically and capably to plan learning that now sustains boys' interests and challenges their thinking. As a result, the difference in attainment between boys and girls is diminishing strongly.
- The teaching of science ensures that pupils have many opportunities to apply their learning in different tasks and challenges. Leaders and teachers ensure that their increased focus on the teaching of science is improving pupils' progress. During the inspection, pupils worked effectively together in a Year 3/4 class to dissect plants and label their parts.
- Staff support pupils' learning beyond the classroom. For example, teachers take pupils on residential trips. Staff and pupils visit important cultural locations, such as local art galleries. Pupils in key stage 2 recently visited a valley to develop their knowledge of river systems and geography. Pupils also incorporated their learning in mathematics through measuring the width and depth of a river and the strength of the current.
- Teachers place great emphasis on developing pupils' language skills. Pupils are

encouraged to speak aloud in the classroom. They do so with confidence and assurance. Pupils at Leigh St John's love to debate their learning. They are proficient listeners who show respect for the suggestions and ideas of others.

- Teachers benefit significantly from the guidance provided by leaders to support pupils with SEND. These pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities provided by their teachers to evaluate their own performance and identify where they are improving. Teachers ensure that current pupils with SEND make strong progress.
- Teachers make excellent use of assessment when planning challenging and exciting learning opportunities for pupils. During the inspection, pupils in a Year 3/4 class experimented with a variety of art mediums to study the work of a famous artist linked to the design of sunflowers. Work in pupils' books shows that they make valuable links between subjects in their studies across the curriculum.
- Parents are wholeheartedly positive about their children's learning. Through the school's use of electronic media to display lessons, parents have a clear insight into their children's learning. All those who responded to Parent View said that their children are taught well at school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils thrive at Leigh St John's. Leaders ensure that all pupils have a voice. The school council of pupil-elected representatives promote the ideas of their peers very well.
- Pupils are highly confident and self-assured when talking about their work and when expressing their views and opinions. They listen with respect to the views of other people. They enjoy opportunities to debate issues and to reflect on their learning.
- Pupils understand the links between being a good education and success for themselves and the wider world community. They demonstrate their commitment through activities such as fundraising and donating food to help homeless people. Pupils recognise that they have a responsibility to care for others in the future.
- Leaders and staff make certain that the welfare of pupils is of paramount importance at the school. Pupils benefit from listening to the views of external speakers who visit the school, such as those from an organisation promoting the well-being of children.
- Pupils value the support that they receive from pastoral leaders during times of challenge for them, such as when they experience bereavement. The pastoral manager works tirelessly to promote pupils' welfare. Her impact stretches beyond pupils to support families, particularly those who are most vulnerable. As a result, effective support is provided for adults and pupils alike.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. They said that instances of bullying are very rare, and where bullying does occur, adults deal with it immediately. The curriculum promotes and supports pupils' well-being and personal development exceptionally well. Pupils are very clear about how to stay safe, both in the real world and when working online. They understand how to keep their mind and body fit and healthy. Pupils value their

school's focus on healthy eating. They also enjoy events such as the daily 'mile run'.

- Pupils have admirable views on equality and diversity. They understand and respect the fact that individual families may have parents of the same gender.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. Pupils are polite and respectful towards others. They wear their new uniform with pride. They greatly value opportunities to support others during activities in the classroom and outside on the playground. As a result, pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is excellent.
- Staff supervise pupils well when classes use the playground. Pupils participate sensibly in a variety of games and exercises. Leaders ensure that the school grounds stimulate and encourage constructive play by pupils.
- The school's breakfast club provides a positive and engaging start to the school day. Pupils work together very positively during this time; their behaviour is calm and orderly.
- Pupils value their education. Levels of pupils' persistent absence are low. Pupils' attendance at school is higher than the national average. The pastoral manager works with families to ensure that pupils arrive punctually and regularly at school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make excellent progress in phonics. The proportion of pupils who attain the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been above the national average for several years. This is because the teaching of phonics is outstanding.
- Across key stage 1, pupils make excellent progress in their studies. Over time, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been consistently high. In 2018, published performance information for pupils at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils' attainment at the expected standard was higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff give the most able pupils a high level of challenge in their learning. These pupils make good progress at both key stages 1 and 2. Work in the most able pupils' books is of a consistently high standard. In 2018, published performance information for pupils in Year 2 showed that the proportion attaining greater depth was broadly in line with the national average in mathematics. It was above the national average in reading and writing.
- Current pupils' progress in science is strong. Leadership and teaching in this subject are highly effective in engaging and motivating pupils to learn. Work in pupils' science books in key stages 1 and 2 shows their sustained and significant progress. In key stage 2, pupils who spoke with inspectors demonstrated an exceptional awareness of the scientific topics that they were studying.
- Pupils make significant progress across the curriculum. This is because leaders and teachers ensure that teaching and sequences of activities are planned and developed

very well. Detailed and thorough preparations are underway for the school's first Year 6 pupils to begin studying their curriculum in September 2019.

- Boys make increasingly strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books and other inspection evidence shows that boys' progress is improving towards that of girls.
- Current pupils with SEND in key stages 1 and 2 receive effective support from leaders and teachers. As a result, the progress of pupils with SEND is improving. However, further work is necessary to ensure that their progress is as good as that of other pupils with the same starting points.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leadership of early years is first-rate. Leaders' and teachers' pursuit of excellence drives their determination to provide the very best education for children. Through the provision of high-quality professional development, adults working with children are well trained and confident in their tasks. The staff benefit greatly from working with a leader who shares her knowledge and expertise both within and beyond the school.
- Staff make certain that the early years environment is stimulating and provides a rich and varied experience for children both indoors and outdoors. During the inspection, children created musical instruments with skill and enthusiasm, exploring ways that they could use different instruments to make sounds.
- Safeguarding is effective in early years. Staff who work with children are vigilant in ensuring that children are safe. Care and nurture are at the heart of all relationships. Children behave sensibly and understand how to stay safe. They enjoy helping their teachers to check the safety of the classroom each morning.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify areas where disadvantaged children in the early years require additional support. Staff provide children with this assistance in a variety of ways, including through individual and small group support. As a consequence, these children make outstanding progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that children make sustained and significant progress from their starting points. Teaching is responsive to children's needs. Staff make expert use of questions to probe and develop children's understanding. Adults empower children to explore tasks thoroughly and encourage them to take risks to develop their imagination and curiosity.
- Children demonstrate high levels of motivation in their play and activities. They are confident and articulate – often demonstrating an eagerness to share their learning with visitors, explaining what they are learning. Children collaborate well with other children, showing an awareness of the need to take their turn and to share.
- Leaders and other staff work in a highly effective manner with parents. Parents receive regular information about their children's progress. They value their visits to the school to share in their children's learning. For instance, parents appreciate the 'magic moments' opportunities, where they can contribute to teachers' assessments of their children.

- Children with SEND make substantial progress in the early years, from starting points which are often lower than found typically. Leaders and teachers use additional funding effectively to ensure that the children receive the additional support that they need to make significant progress.
- Children make substantial progress in the Reception Year. In the reading and writing early learning goals in 2018, the proportion of children exceeding the expected standard was higher than the national average. Children are very well prepared for Year 1. This is because of high academic standards and strong systems to support children's personal, social and health needs.

School details

Unique reference number	106517
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10087786

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kelly Partington
Headteacher	Emma Lightfoot
Telephone number	01942 672 825
Website	www.leighstjohnsprimary.wigan.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@admin.leighstjohnsprimary.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2009

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school changed from being an infant school to a primary school in 2016. Currently, the oldest pupils are in Year 5.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school during the school year is below average.

- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club. Leaders also offer a wide range of clubs which operate during the school day and after school.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in March 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents including: information about pupils' attendance, improvement plans, self-evaluation information, safeguarding records, curriculum planning and records of staff training.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of 27 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as a range of parent questionnaires undertaken by the school.
- An inspector met with representatives of the school's consortium, who support improvement and help local schools to collaborate together.
- An inspector met a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally and observed pupils' movement around the school. A formal meeting also took place with a group of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' behaviour at the start and end of the school day and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast club and observed pupils' behaviour and participation.
- Inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and talked with them about their learning. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books that they enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, school improvement advisers, middle leaders, the leader of the provision for pupils with SEND, the pastoral manager and teachers.
- Inspectors carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attendance information for all groups of pupils.
- Inspectors analysed the contents of the school's website.

Inspection team

Gill Pritchard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Maureen Hints	Ofsted Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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