

Leighswood School

Broadmeadow, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands WS9 8HZ

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2019

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

- The executive headteacher and head of school have a clear vision for the school. They are ambitious and have created a culture of high expectations.
- Leaders and governors know the school well and have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have taken decisive actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The Cadmus Federation of schools has provided the school with good support. It has supported improvements in teaching and learning that have resulted in improved outcomes for pupils.
- The teaching of English and mathematics has improved because of stronger leadership of these subjects. Leaders have introduced new schemes of work, which are supporting higher expectations and stronger progress. However, most-able pupils are not consistently challenged enough to work with greater resilience and independence.
- Early years provision is a strength of the school. Teaching and learning are skilfully adapted to meet the needs of the children. The outdoor environment is of a very high quality.
- The curriculum is well planned, with a focus on vocabulary development. Leaders have plans to widen the curriculum using the high-quality outdoor environment.
- Middle leaders value the recent opportunities to develop their skills in order to monitor, review and evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Recent outcomes in writing at the end of key stage 2 are very strong. Pupils in other year groups have fewer opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly. Some parents and carers and pupils raised concerns about behaviour outside lessons. Leaders have taken actions to improve previous poor behaviour and are implementing an effective behaviour management policy.
- The standard of presentation of pupils' work is inconsistent, and where it is weaker, pupils' progress is less strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by ensuring that:
 - teachers allow pupils, especially the most able, to move on independently to more challenging work as soon as they are ready
 - teachers consistently have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work
 - pupils across the school have opportunities to write at length, with increasing autonomy and independence.
- Develop middle leaders further so they can support, monitor and enhance the curriculum effectively.
- Continue to develop the behaviour policy, by ensuring that:
 - at breaktimes, more pupils modify their behaviour and understand their roles and responsibilities
 - staff understand and apply the policy consistently so that pupils are safe and happy at all times.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher and head of school work well together and have high aspirations for the school. They are well supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher and have taken decisive actions to bring about school improvement.
- School leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Since the appointment of the executive headteacher in September 2018, leaders have worked to address the areas identified for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. They have ensured that all staff have the knowledge and understanding required to bring about the best possible outcomes for pupils. There have been significant changes in staff since the previous inspection. Staff value the recent training opportunities. Morale is high.
- The involvement of the Cadmus Federation of schools has supported improvements in leadership, governance, teaching and learning. Middle leaders have benefited from recent training to develop their skills. They are becoming more involved in the planning, monitoring and reviewing of their subject areas. This is at an early stage and there are opportunities to further enhance their roles.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are strong and have a clear understanding of their subject areas. They carefully track and monitor subject coverage and pupils' progress. They support other staff to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. They have clear plans for the development of their subject areas.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well. They have an understanding of the barriers for learning that exist for disadvantaged pupils. They rigorously track and analyse the needs and progress of this group of pupils. This results in effective interventions to support pupils' academic, emotional and personal needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils across the school are making strong progress. Walsall local authority has commissioned this work as an example of good practice.
- Leaders have introduced new, rigorous assessment systems. Leaders hold regular meetings with staff to discuss pupils' progress. Any pupils at risk of falling behind are identified and provided with additional support.
- Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. High-quality assessments are carried out and interventions are put in place to meet individual needs. These interventions are regularly reviewed and revised. The school is very inclusive and supports pupils with SEND well. Leaders adapt the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND are fully involved in all aspects of school life. The development of nurture groups is supporting pupils with emotional or well-being issues.
- The school's curriculum covers all aspects of the national curriculum. There are examples of engaging cross-curricular work across the school with a strong focus on vocabulary and writing development. Leaders have plans to widen the curriculum using the high-quality outdoor environment.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport premium well. The school has a strong sporting heritage. A team of Year 5 and Year 6 boys reached the final of the EFL

football cup and played at Wembley. Sports coaches are well used to develop pupils' skills and increase participation in sport and physical activity.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed across the school. For example, pupils learn about a range of religions and cultures. They understand British values. Pupils take part in voting for the school council and take on responsibilities within the classroom. Recently, leaders have introduced approaches to enable pupils to reflect on their actions and attitudes and the impact these can have on others.

Governance of the school

- The recent changes to governance have strengthened governors' ability to support and challenge leaders. They are dedicated to the school and have an increasing awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. They are working well together to sustain recent improvements in standards across the school.
- The newly appointed chair of governors is a national leader of governance and has supported his fellow governors to grow in skill and confidence. He is able to use his expertise to ensure that governors now have the capacity to support leaders in their ambition and drive.
- Governors ensure that suitable performance management procedures for staff are in place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding procedures and systems are well established across the school. Leaders make sure that the appropriate checks are made on all adults who work at the school. They work well with outside agencies and families.
- Staff know the pupils and families well and are aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns. Staff have welcomed the recent introduction of an online tracking and reporting programme. This enables them to share concerns and build up a picture of the needs of vulnerable pupils. Records are detailed and securely kept.
- Staff and governors receive up-to date training, including regular updates about current issues including the 'Prevent' duty. Safeguarding is a regular item at governor and staff meetings.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are taught how to keep safe. Topics covered include road safety, water safety, personal safety and e-safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching and learning and driven up standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and supports reading in key stages 1 and 2. Pupils read well and enjoy reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils read very confidently with expression. They are able to self-correct and understand what they are reading. They

bring characters to life and use well-developed inference and deduction skills to describe and discuss texts. Less able readers are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.

- The focus on vocabulary development across the school has helped to develop pupils' writing. In some year groups, there are many opportunities to write at length with increasing independence, and pupils produce writing of a high standard. However, this is not the case in all year groups. This means that some pupils, especially the most able, make less progress than that of which they are capable.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved because of the introduction of a new scheme of work and the support of leaders. Pupils say they enjoy mathematics and teachers make the lessons fun. In a Year 1 class, pupils worked independently, confidently using apparatus to investigate a problem and reach a mathematical conclusion. In Year 4, pupils were challenged to explain their answers using precise mathematical vocabulary.
- Leaders have used staff training to develop staff's subject knowledge. Staff use questioning well, and in the best lessons, skilfully, to extend pupils' thinking and challenge misconceptions. On occasions, staff do not always challenge pupils to work independently in ways that could extend or deepen their understanding and knowledge. Not all work in books is consistently well presented and basic skills are not developed as strongly as they could be.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They support pupils in the classroom, in small groups and individually. Teaching assistants offer effective support to disadvantaged and pupils with SEND.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work well in lessons and listen carefully to instructions. Classrooms are calm and orderly learning environments.
- Staff and leaders know their pupils and families well. They offer good support to vulnerable families. Pupils feel well cared for and know they can seek support if they need it.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that any cases of bullying are quickly dealt with. They know the school rules, which they think are fair. They say that they enjoy playtimes.
- The two breakfast clubs, one for key stage 1 and one for key stage 2 pupils, are welcoming, orderly settings for pupils to enjoy. Pupils are happy and well cared for, with a wide range of adult- and pupil-led activities to choose from.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils walk calmly around the school. They are polite, friendly and well mannered and help each other. They made the inspectors feel very welcome, holding open doors and waving across the playground.
- The majority of parents said that their children are happy at school and feel safe. However, some parents and a few children raised concerns on Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and in conversations with inspectors, about behaviour outside lessons, which was not always good and sometimes over boisterous. At the time of the inspection, break- and lunchtimes were happy times for pupils who were engaged in a variety of activities, including sitting and talking to each other. Leaders acknowledge that in the past, behaviour has not always been good. They have worked hard with pupils, parents and external agencies to support improvements in behaviour. They have detailed records of their actions, and the number of incidents of poor behaviour has declined rapidly, with no exclusions in the summer term. New policies have been developed and are now beginning to support more consistent approaches to behaviour management. More work is needed to consolidate these approaches so they are fully understood and applied by everyone.
- Attendance has improved because of the proactive actions of school leaders to ensure that pupils attend regularly and any absence is quickly followed up. Attendance is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The recent improvements to teaching and learning, including the new approaches to assessment, are having a positive effect on pupils’ outcomes. Teachers know the progress pupils in each year group should make.
- Current progress information, including some statutory end-of-year assessment data for 2019, shows that most pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in the end of Year 1 phonics screening check was 88%, with 81% of disadvantaged pupils meeting the standard. Phonic results for the past two years have been above the national figure.
- Assessments at the end of key stage 1 for 2019 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is at least in line with the national average for 2018. Attainment at the higher standard is not as strong, especially in writing.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard or above in writing at the end of key stage 2 was 90% at the end of Year 6 in 2019, with 26% achieving the higher standard. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard was 82%, with 29% achieving at the higher standard. The local authority moderated, and agreed, teachers’ assessments for writing. Data available in school shows that outcomes in the national tests at the end of key stage 2 should be strong.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics because their needs are accurately identified and the support is appropriate. Where interventions are not successful, they are quickly changed, for example adapting the phonics programme used in school to meet the needs of key stage 1 pupils.

- Work in pupils' books shows that most pupils across the school are making at least expected, and often better, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in other subjects is not as strong across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- Early years provision is a strength of the school. The leader provides strong, purposeful leadership. She is proactive and ambitious for the children who are in early years. Staff know the children extremely well and adapt teaching to meet their needs and interests.
- Data tracking and assessment are rigorous and accurate. Staff use the information to adapt their teaching, which results in children making good progress. Attainment on entry is falling. More children are entering early years with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Children make at least expected progress across all areas of learning. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development remains broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of children making more than expected progress is increasing.
- Routines are well established and children are confident and able to make their own choices of activities. Relationships between staff and children are good, warm and nurturing. Staff work well with parents, and positive partnerships contribute to high-quality provision.
- The curriculum is engaging and staff use both the indoor and well-developed outdoor environment creatively to engage all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged or children with SEND. At the time of the inspection, children from across the age group were all purposefully and happily creating an impromptu beach, enjoying water play, digging in the garden and collecting their own-grown strawberries. Children have many opportunities to talk and share experiences with other children and adults.
- Gaps between different pupil groups are diminishing and early years funding is well used to support identified groups. Staff have accurately identified the areas of weakness for disadvantaged pupils and provide interventions that support vocabulary and language development. This gives these children much firmer foundations on which to build.
- Effective phonics teaching supports early reading and writing. Careful tracking and recording of children's learning capture children's needs and interests. The engaging learning activities help children sustain their learning, often beyond the level typical for children of their age.
- Arrangements for two-year-old children are well established. Leaders have adapted the environment to suit children's needs and meet welfare arrangements. Safeguarding arrangements across early years are effective. All adults are vigilant and ensure that children are safe.

School details

Unique reference number	131433
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10088489

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	623
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roland Roberts
Executive Headteacher	Max Vlahakis
Telephone number	01922 743621
Website	www.leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Email address	postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2017

Information about this school

- Leighswood Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the previous inspection in February 2017, there have been some significant changes in leadership, staffing and governance. The executive headteacher and head of school were appointed in September 2018 and the school joined the Cadmus Federation of schools in February 2019.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children. Children attend Nursey class part time, either in the mornings or afternoons. There are three Reception classes, which children attend full time.
- The school provides before- and after-school provision, which is run by school staff.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is in line with the national average.
- The great majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage. The

proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low.

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons in all year groups. Many of these observations were made jointly with school leaders. Inspectors also conducted learning walks to view aspects of the work of the school.
- One inspector visited an assembly.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in their English and mathematics books with school leaders. Inspectors also looked at books in classrooms and scrutinised topic and science books.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation, school leaders' improvement plans, information and data on pupils' starting points, achievement and progress, and attendance and safeguarding information. The lead inspector scrutinised the school's website and documents relating to governance.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school and other leaders. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of governors. She also had a telephone conversation with a representative of Walsall local authority.
- An inspector visited the breakfast club and spoke to the manager and pupils attending the club.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. Inspectors heard pupils from Years 1 to 3 and Year 6 read. They met with pupils from across key stages 1 and 2 to ask them for their views about the school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- The lead inspector analysed the 75 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the 69 free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire or Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Hinton	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019