

Inspection of Laira Green Primary School

Bramley Road, Laira, Plymouth, Devon PL3 6BP

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils are happy at school. The school is a very welcoming place. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. Staff know pupils well. One pupil's comment reflected the views of many when she said that, 'in Laura Green, you will always get the help and support you need'. Nonetheless, a few pupils report that when bullying happens, it can take too long for staff to sort it out.

The quality of education pupils receive is not good. Teachers are not clear enough about what pupils need to learn and when. Consequently, pupils do not secure the knowledge and skills they need in many subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils are usually calm in lessons. However, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are not yet good. At times, pupils do not engage fully in their learning. Behaviour at playtime is not good enough.

Staff think carefully about enriching pupils' learning. Pupils learn to swim and row, ride a bike, and visit Dartmoor and go on residential visits. They are currently enjoying getting ready for the Mayflower 400 celebrations.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

While many parents and carers are satisfied, others recognise that the school needs to improve. The headteacher is leading many important changes to bring about improvements. Many subject leaders are new to their roles. Their recent work to improve the quality of education is beginning to take hold. However, the quality of education that pupils receive is not yet good.

The early years curriculum does not help children to develop their knowledge and understanding well enough. Children in Reception do not learn as effectively as they should. At times, children do not sustain their concentration.

Older pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects. However, leaders have not put a clear plan in place about what pupils should learn and when. It is not clear how the different subjects will deepen pupils' knowledge and skills over time.

Leaders are taking urgent steps to sequence the curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics so that there is greater consistency in these subjects. However, it is early days. There are still weaknesses in the way these subjects are implemented. Teachers do not follow the school's agreed procedures and policies. The inconsistencies in delivering the reading, writing and mathematics curriculums, particularly for the youngest pupils, mean that pupils do not learn enough. Pupils are not being well enough prepared for their next stage of education.

There is a school-wide approach to early reading. All staff have been trained in it. Staff use consistent strategies to help pupils remember the sounds they are

learning. However, staff do not ensure that pupils apply their phonic knowledge consistently well. As a result, pupils do not read and write with the accuracy they should. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils are happy to read aloud, and answer questions about what they have read.

Teachers do not have consistently strong subject knowledge in the subjects they teach. Teachers do not always use the information they have about what pupils can do in order to plan their teaching well enough. This does not help pupils know more and remember more. As a result, pupils do not gain all the knowledge they should.

Leaders have established a clear behaviour policy. In classes, most pupils follow instructions. Frequently, however, they get distracted. At social times, including on the playground, there is some misbehaviour. Staff do not manage this consistently well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive precise support to help them catch up. The special educational needs coordinator oversees the additional help pupils receive well. These pupils receive the support they need, and they do not miss too much of classroom learning with their classmates.

Leaders have developed a strong programme for pupils' personal development. They study important events such as Holocaust Memorial Day and learn about different faiths. Staff support pupils with social and emotional needs very well. Staff try to understand what might be worrying these pupils. Over time, many of these pupils improve their behaviour as a result of the support they receive.

Governors know the school well, including the areas for development. However, they do not take enough action to hold leaders to account for improving the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's culture of knowing children well and caring for them underpins the work to keep them safe. Staff recruitment is completed in line with requirements. Staff training is up to date. Staff work closely with many other professionals to support families with complex needs. Leaders' work ensures that pupils who may be at risk of harm get the right support. The curriculum is effective in developing pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The planning and sequencing of the curriculum in most subjects are not well thought out. This impedes pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum across all subjects is ambitious for its pupils and it is coherently

sequenced and planned. Leaders should ensure that pupils develop the detailed knowledge and skills they should across all subjects so that they achieve well.

- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive well enough. Governors need to ensure that they check the impact of the school's improvement work so that they hold leaders to account stringently for raising the quality of education to good.
- Many subject leaders are new to post. They are still learning about their role and responsibilities. Governors and senior leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have the skills and knowledge to lead their subjects well, so that pupils secure the depth of knowledge they should.
- The reading and mathematics curriculums are not adapted for pupils of all abilities. Pupils do not acquire the early knowledge and skills they need to read accurately and gain essential knowledge in mathematics. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers and teaching assistants have further training to gain strong subject knowledge so that they deliver curriculum content that meets pupils' abilities well.
- Teachers do not follow the school's policies and procedures. There are inconsistencies in how well pupils learn. Leaders need to ensure that their curriculum plans, policies and intentions are being implemented consistently in all classrooms, so that pupils have maximum opportunity to learn more and remember more.
- Children do not get off to as a strong start as they could in Reception. Leaders need to consider carefully what children are capable of, and ensure that the early years curriculum provides children with the essential knowledge they need to be well prepared for their next stage.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not good. Pupils do not stick at their work well enough. Teachers need to ensure that they use all the information they have about what pupils know and can do to ensure that work meets pupils' abilities well.
- Pupils and staff do not follow the school's behaviour policy closely. Pupils do not behave well at social times in the school day. Leaders need to ensure that pupils and staff adhere to the school's behaviour policy consistently well so that pupils' behaviour at social times is consistently good.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	113278
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10122357
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Wickett
Headteacher	Bernadette Kennedy
Website	www.lairagreen.com
Date of previous inspection	19–20 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Laira Green is an average-sized primary school.
- Children in early years are taught as one group. In the rest of the school, they are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. Although the school has an increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, the proportion is still lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- More pupils than is usual join the school at times other than the normal starting points.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, a group of governors (including the chair), and the local authority education adviser.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and personal, social and health education (PSHE). This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils, and listening to pupils read.
- We considered the views of staff during meetings and examined the responses of 18 staff to the confidential questionnaire.
- We reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- We spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and considered the views of 49 parents who responded to Ofsted’s questionnaire, Parent View.
- We also considered the contents of a letter from a parent and an email from a governor.

Inspection team

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