

Inspection of a good school: Leven Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

South Street, Leven, Beverley HU17 5NX

Inspection dates:

5–6 March 2020

Outcome

Leven Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are happy and feel safe. They are well cared for and all staff have their best interests at heart. Pupils behave very well and are enthusiastic about their learning. They told me that bullying is not an issue. There are lots of events, visits and activities which pupils can take part in. Police visits, the village carnival and the Year 6 residential are all popular events.

In some important areas, the school is not doing all it could to make sure pupils get the best quality of education.

Pupils enjoy reading. Some pupils find it hard to focus when reading and do not make the progress of which they are capable. The quality of pupils' writing across the school is variable. Older pupils often produce written work which is of high quality. However, in some year groups, the quality of pupils' written work is not as strong. In mathematics, pupils' work is variable too. Different teachers use different schemes of work to teach mathematics. Pupils are confused because there is not a consistent approach to how they learn new knowledge and skills.

In all subjects, teachers are not using assessment as well as they could to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning.

School leaders are not doing enough to challenge these weaknesses and make the necessary improvements. Too many leaders work in isolation rather than as part of a whole-school team.

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

Reading is an important part of pupils' experience at the school. Phonics teaching begins as soon as pupils join the school. The books pupils choose are well matched to their phonics skills. Sometimes pupils lose concentration too easily when they are reading. This can limit the amount of progress they make.

The writing curriculum develops pupils' skills in a sensible order that builds on their prior learning. Older pupils have developed their skills in drafting and editing their work. Because of this, their work is very often of a high quality. This is not the case in all year groups. In some year groups, pupils are not challenged to produce high-quality written work. Their work is well below the standard of which they are capable.

In mathematics, leaders have decided to adopt a new scheme of work. They have allowed individual teachers to continue to use parts of another scheme. This is not helpful. In each scheme used, there is a clear sequence of teaching and learning. But the ad hoc approach to deciding on which scheme to use means that the experiences of pupils are dependent on which class they are in and which teacher they have. In most cases, but not all, pupils receive a reasonable quality of education in mathematics.

Assessment practices are inconsistent across the school. Leaders have introduced pupil progress meetings. Now, they are beginning to use assessment strategically.

The school has made sure that children in the early years receive the support they need to settle into school life and enjoy their learning. The early years is well resourced and structured. Leaders assess pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in partnership with parents. The school has recently developed passports for pupils with SEND. These provide teachers with the information they need. As a result, pupils with SEND are well supported in the classroom.

The vast majority of pupils are very well behaved at this school. They are polite and courteous to staff, each other and visitors. They are keen to talk about their learning. Staff plan a range of social and cultural experiences for pupils. These include playing instruments alongside musicians or attending sports events.

Governors and the local authority are working hard with school leaders to make the necessary changes and improvements. They have identified accurately the priorities for development. In addition, the school is working with a partner school to develop practice and policy further.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that reading, writing and mathematics may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors have been proactive in working with the local authority to commission an audit of safeguarding arrangements. They have acted on recommendations. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that all

adults employed by the school or who work with pupils have the appropriate checks made on them. Staff and governors are regularly trained on safeguarding. Leaders make sure important updates in policy and practice are provided. All of the staff I talked to were confident when speaking about the school's safeguarding protocols and arrangements. Pupils told me they feel safe at the school. They know who to go to if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, leaders work in isolation and do not communicate as effectively as they might. This can add to staff work load unnecessarily. Leaders should establish clear lines of communication and accountability where this is not as well developed as it is in other areas.
- There has been, in the past, a lack of effective action to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress in writing. Consequently, the quality of some pupils' writing is well below that required. Leaders should ensure that teachers' expectations of the quality of all pupils' writing is high and all pupils make the progress they are capable of making.
- There is some inconsistency in how mathematics is taught. Consequently, the experiences of pupils in mathematics varies from teacher to teacher. Leaders should ensure that these inconsistencies are removed.
- Across subjects, the way in which assessment is used is not consistent. As a result, assessment does not routinely identify the gaps in pupils' learning either accurately or in a timely manner. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used consistently, identifies gaps in pupils' learning quickly and informs next steps for pupils' learning.
- Leaders have not acted rapidly enough to tackle areas of weakness in the school or make the further improvements required. Because of this, over the past three years there has been a gradual decline in pupils' standards of achievement. Leaders, including governors, should make the changes required to urgently improve the standards of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 17–18 November 2015.

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	117981
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	10097550
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of governing body	Carol Stoney and Dave Sweeney
Headteacher	Andrew Dolman
Website	www.levencofe.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 November 2015.

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. I also met with a group of governors, including the co-chair of governors. I took account of the 16 responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff.
- I observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. I gathered pupils’ views about the school through formal and informal discussions. I also took into account of the views of 42 pupils who responded to Ofsted’s pupils’ survey.

- I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and safeguarding documents. I also evaluated information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- I took account of the views of 67 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, along with 39 responses submitted as free-text.
- I looked in-depth at the following subjects: reading, English and writing, and mathematics. In doing so, I visited classes across year groups and reviewed pupils' work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. I also met with teachers.

Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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