

Inspection of Little Leigh Primary School

Shutley Lane, Little Leigh, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4RN

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Little Leigh Primary School. They arrive at school keen to start their day. Staff greet them with welcoming smiles. Pupils are confident that they have staff to speak to in school if they have any worries or concerns. They also value the 'tell us' boxes. Pupils trust staff to respond to their concerns and to help them if they need it. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders want the best for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils strive to live up to these high expectations, including the expectations for good behaviour. The majority of pupils, including children in the early years, follow routines and behave well. They are eager to be 'ready, respectful and safe.' They look forward to the weekly celebration assemblies and are keen to earn certificates for their behaviour and work. Across a range of subjects, pupils achieve well.

Pupils value the activities on offer to them, such as sugarcraft, cookery, art and sports clubs. They are proud to represent the school as part of the school choir. For example, at a recent 'Northwich Sings' event and the county agricultural show. Visits to local areas, such as Burwardsley, provide pupils with opportunities to learn more about their locality. Eco leaders are proud to make a positive difference to their local community such as by completing local litter picks.

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

From the early years to Year 6, leaders have set out an ambitious curriculum for pupils. The curriculum is well ordered. Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn in different subjects.

Leaders make sure that staff have regular curriculum training to develop their skills and knowledge. This helps teachers to teach different subjects effectively. In most lessons, teachers explain new learning clearly and design activities which help to deliver the curriculum successfully. However, occasionally, teachers do not choose the most suitable activities to assist pupils to learn new ideas. This hinders how well some pupils learn.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to find out how well pupils have learned what they have been taught during individual lessons. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not equipped teachers with the strategies needed to check that pupils are remembering key knowledge over time. Therefore, teachers do not spot that some pupils develop gaps in their learning because they have not retained knowledge in their long term memories. As a result, these pupils do not have the foundations needed on which to base new learning. This prevents them from achieving as highly as they could.

Children begin learning phonics when they join the school in the Reception Year. The school's phonics programme develops pupils' knowledge of phonics successfully. Suitable training has been provided for all staff to deliver the programme well. The books that pupils read contain words that match the sounds that they are learning in their lessons. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Teachers quickly identify and support any pupils who may need extra help to build their phonics knowledge.

Staff make recommendations to older pupils about books that they might want to read. Pupils enjoy reading with their buddy reading classes each Friday. They look forward to finding out who will be awarded a 'name in the frame' award for regular reading each week. Pupils are provided with ambitious and high-quality texts from different types of books. As a result, pupils read books by a wide range of different authors throughout their time at the school.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Teachers and leaders identify any pupils with additional needs quickly and effectively. They provide timely support to help pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders work well with external agencies to make sure that those pupils who need more specialist help receive it.

Most pupils, including children in the early years, follow routines and behave well. Pupils regularly display good manners. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is extended beyond the curriculum. Pupils learn about important international goals and how they can contribute to these being achieved. For example, through supporting a local foodbank to address hunger. Pupils also learn how to look after their physical and mental health and about what makes a healthy relationship.

Governors and trustees are well informed about the quality of education that pupils receive. They hold senior leaders to account effectively and provide appropriate support when required. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff are trained to identify safeguarding issues. Staff know what action to take if they have any worries about pupils' well-being or safety. Leaders have a clear system for staff to report any concerns that they may have. They respond quickly to any concerns raised. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive the support that they need.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught about different aspects of safety. For example, they learn about fire safety, how to be safe on their bicycles, and how to stay safe when they are working or playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers do not select the most appropriate activities to help pupils learn new ideas and concepts. This hinders how well some pupils learn. Leaders should ensure that teachers design learning that supports pupils to learn new knowledge and information. This is to ensure that pupils learn all that they should.
- In a few subjects, teachers do not check that pupils are remembering the most important knowledge that they need to learn in the longer term. Some pupils do not retain what they have learned securely enough in their long-term memory. This prevents them from achieving as highly as they could. Leaders should continue their work to develop appropriate strategies that enable teachers to check that pupils have embedded knowledge successfully in their long-term memory.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	146202
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10294408
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Butcher
Headteacher	Toni Clarke
Website	www.littleleighprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Little Leigh Primary School converted to become an academy school in October 2019 and is part of The Create Learning trust. When its predecessor school, Little Leigh Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- A seconded headteacher is currently supporting the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher to lead the school in the substantive headteacher's absence.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders and teachers. They also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders, spoke to pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the acting headteacher, seconded headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees of the multi-academy trust, members of the board of trustees and members of the local academy board for the school. She also met with the director of education and chief executive officer for the trust.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. They also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Schelene Ferris

Ofsted Inspector

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