

Inspection of Leigh On Mendip School

Leigh Street, Leigh-on-Mendip, Radstock, Somerset BA3 5QQ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 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

The head of school is Louisa Phillips. There is also an executive headteacher, Dan Turull, who is responsible for this school and two others. This school is part of The Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by chief executive officer, Alun Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tony Wells.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Leigh On Mendip School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Leigh-Upon-Mendip First School to be outstanding, before it opened as Leigh On Mendip School as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leigh on Mendip School is a place where everyone cares for one another and gets on well. A strong sense of community exists among pupils, staff and parents. Pupils talk confidently about how the school's values help them to give their best, be respectful and enjoy their learning.

Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations for behaviour. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They understand the school rules and follow them well, both in and outside the classroom. This starts in the early years where children listen to instructions and play well together.

Pupils feel safe. They build positive relationships with staff. Pupils speak highly about the way in which staff treat them as individuals. They trust adults to listen to them and help them to solve any problems in a kind and caring way. .

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs such as football, craft and sign language. They are proud to become members of the school council and eco club. Pupils value the opportunity they have to take part in events in the local area, such as donating food to a local foodbank. Pupils say that these experiences help them to help others.

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

The school has a clear vision for what all pupils can achieve. With the support of the trust, an ambitious curriculum has been designed which makes clear what pupils need to know and when.

Reading is a priority for the school. All staff benefit from the training they receive to teach phonics and reading well. Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start school. Staff ensure that pupils practise reading with books that match the sounds they are learning. Pupils who fall behind get extra help to catch up. Pupils enjoy listening to adults read stories to them. As they move through the school, pupils read a range of texts with increasing accuracy, fluency and expression.

Teachers use their knowledge of the subjects they teach well. In mathematics, for example, they share important information and vocabulary clearly with pupils. Pupils benefit from this. In the early years, children recognise and talk confidently about the properties of shapes. Older pupils use their mathematical understanding and knowledge well to tackle more complex problems when multiplying fractions.

Pupils learn well in most wider curriculum subjects. In religious education (RE), for example, teachers routinely check on what pupils have remembered before moving on to new learning. Pupils respond well to this. Children in the early years talk knowledgeably about religious stories such as Rama and Sita. Older pupils make links between different religions and talk in detail about beliefs such as reincarnation. However, in some areas of the curriculum, this is not the case. Assessment information is not yet used well enough to check on what pupils know

and can do to plan for future learning. This makes it more difficult for pupils to build their knowledge.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. Individual pupil plans are precise. Staff follow them closely. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum as well as their peers.

Pupils are positive about learning. They take pride in their work. This starts in the early years where children take turns and are eager to share their ideas. Pupils of all ages enjoy the range of activities on offer to them during social times. The school is a calm environment where pupils behave well and show respect for each other and adults.

The school monitors attendance rigorously to ensure that pupils' attendance remains high. It intervenes early to stop pupils from having too much time off. As a result, pupils attend school regularly. The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils know why fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance are important in day-to-day life. They talk confidently about protected characteristics and understand why it is important to treat everyone equally.

Governors and trustees know the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They hold leaders to account robustly for their actions. The school and trust prioritise developing staff expertise. Staff value the training they receive which helps them to strengthen their teaching.

Most parents speak highly about the school. Many comment on the school's role in the local community and the positive start children make. Despite this, some parents have mixed views about communication.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is still being developed in some subjects. It is not yet used well enough to check that pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not build their knowledge well over time. The trust needs to ensure that the school uses assessment effectively across all subjects and use this information to inform future learning.
- A minority of parents have mixed views of the school. They do not feel that communication is effective. The trust should continue to engage with parents so that they have greater confidence in the school's work.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	146447
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10267861
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Wells
CEO of trust	Alun Williams
Headteacher	Dan Turull (executive headteacher) Louisa Phillips (head of school)
Website	www.leighonmendipschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher and the head of school have been in post since September 2018.
- There have been some changes to the structure of the governing body since the last inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year olds.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils, representatives from the local governing body and the trust. The lead inspector also had a telephone discussion with a trustee from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and RE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Neil Swait

Ofsted Inspector

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