

# Inspection of Leechpool Primary School

Leechpool Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 6AG

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 June 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils benefit from many opportunities that broaden their understanding of the world. They appreciate these experiences, are open-minded, and welcome different cultures. Pupils are particularly proud of their roles as pupil leaders. Pupils relish the broad range of clubs that provide opportunities to nurture and explore their talents and interests.

Pupils' behaviour is mixed. Younger pupils at break and lunch play together with positivity and kindness. However, older pupils do not consistently demonstrate the same respect towards others. Mabel, the school dog, is a much-loved part of the school's emotional support for pupils. Pupils appreciate the school's efforts to support them. However, a few pupils are not confident that staff listen and take effective action if they have concerns. The youngest pupils feel a sense of positivity and love for their school experience. This is not as consistently strong for older pupils.

In some subjects, the school's ambition for learning is clear. In these areas, pupils flourish. Pupils relish creative opportunities in music, regularly composing and performing ambitious pieces. Pupils feel a huge source of pride from their experiences competing and collaborating in physical education. However, pupils' experience across the rest of the curriculum is variable. This means that overall, pupils' learning is inconsistent.

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

Children in Reception benefit from a strong start to school. The curriculum is well designed to provide them with essential knowledge that helps to prepare them for Year 1. Pupils demonstrate high-quality listening and attention skills. They communicate with adults and peers effectively. They understand how to behave and collaborate well to solve tasks. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified and supported. As a result, children's attitudes to learning are highly positive.

The curriculum in the rest of the school is ambitious but of mixed quality. In reading, mathematics and a few other subjects, there is a sequenced curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge. In music, pupils sequentially develop their understanding of important concepts such as timbre from Reception onwards. In other foundation subjects, the key knowledge is not fully identified and so the progression of learning is not coherent. This means that pupils' achievement over time is variable.

The curriculum is inconsistently implemented. In some subjects, the planned curriculum is taught with clarity and passion. In other subjects, staff do not sufficiently check pupils' understanding. Pupils are taught misconceptions or make key errors which are not addressed. This means that pupils' understanding in wider subjects is variable, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged. In 2023, Year 6

pupils achieved broadly in line with the national averages. However, current pupils are not sufficiently prepared for their next stages of education.

Pupils have a strong start to their reading journey. From Reception onwards, staff follow a clear scheme to help pupils to learn the strategies and sounds they need. Pupils confidently apply this knowledge in their reading. They read books that are closely matched to the sounds they know. As a result, pupils achieve significantly above national averages in the phonics screening check. For older pupils, the teaching of reading is less coherent. The school is not as precise in designing activities that accurately match what pupils need to learn. As a result, not all older pupils learn to read as well as they should.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are variable across different subjects. The school has not ensured that staff are consistent in promoting positive behaviour. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is mixed. This sometimes leads to learning being disrupted. Pupils' attendance is typically above the national average. However, the attendance of the low numbers of disadvantaged pupils is not high enough. The school's approach to improve this is not yet fully developed.

The personal development of pupils is a priority. The wider curriculum provides pupils with key learning for life. They understand online safety and how to promote physical and mental health. Work with the local police provides support for teaching challenging topics, including consent. Pupils benefit from enrichment opportunities such as 'young interpreters', to encourage positive citizenship. The school has ensured that the personal development provision sharply supports pupils who are disadvantaged.

The school has not been sufficiently robust in challenging itself for the best interests of pupils. Staff do feel well cared for, and workload and welfare have been managed effectively. The professional development and support of early career teachers is well considered. However, the school has not assured themselves of the effectiveness of staff training or the impact on pupils' learning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum design in some subjects lacks precision and is implemented inconsistently. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school must ensure that the key knowledge and skills are precisely identified, and that staff are accurate in checking pupils' understanding.

- The school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour is variable. This means that some pupils' behaviour disrupts learning. The school should support staff to promote positive behaviour to enable all pupils to focus on learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not attend often enough. This means they miss out on key learning and do not achieve as well as they could. The school should redouble its efforts to promote good attendance so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are fully prepared for their next stage of education.
- The school's oversight of improvement work lacks precision. This means that the school does not have an accurate view of the impact of new initiatives. The school should ensure that the impact of new strategies is fully evaluated to ensure they are having the desired effect.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125918
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296326
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	418
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Vinod Wagiani
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Davenport
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leechpoolprimaryschool.co.uk">www.leechpoolprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 February and 1 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## 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 any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. The inspectors also met with members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons,

spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. The inspectors also spoke to pupils in lessons and during playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, the school improvement plan and minutes of governors' meetings.
- 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.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and carers and considered their responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- Pupils were met with throughout the inspection to gather their views about the school.

### **Inspection team**

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vicky Matthews

Ofsted Inspector

David Harris

Ofsted Inspector

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