

# Inspection of Legh Vale Primary School

Legh Road, Haydock, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 0ER

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Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Pupils at Legh Vale embody their motto of 'being the best I can be'. Staff warmly welcome pupils into school each day. Pupils describe the school as 'an amazing place that they feel proud of'. They are happy and safe.

The school has high expectations of pupils' academic success across each area of the curriculum. Pupils understand these expectations and they rise to them. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils are friendly and courteous. From the beginning of the early years to Year 6, pupils are attentive in lessons and enthusiastic to learn. Disruption to pupils' learning and to school life is rare. If poor behaviour were to happen, pupils trust adults to deal with it quickly and prevent it from happening again.

Pupils are offered a range of opportunities that successfully promote their wider personal development. These activities include visits from authors, poets and local rugby teams. Pupils look forward to their annual 'Legh Vale's got Talent' show. They talk excitedly about trips to the local safari park, the science museum and the farm. Pupils speak warmly about the importance of respect for each other and everyone being welcome in their school.

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

This school is emerging from a period of change, with a new headteacher recently appointed and a new chair of governors elected. The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. In some subjects, the school has ensured that the curriculum makes clear the knowledge that staff should deliver and in which order. However, in a few subject curriculums, the school is still refining the key information that pupils should learn. This means that some pupils do not learn all that they could.

Staff have benefited from curriculum training in recent times. In the main, they choose appropriate resources, activities and questions to help pupils to learn. Most staff explain new concepts with clarity and use a range of strategies to check on pupils' understanding effectively. However, staff do not make sure that pupils are given opportunities to recall and retrieve their learning so that it becomes embedded in their memories. As a result, some pupils forget what they have learned previously and then cannot build on what they know as they move through the curriculum.

The school has prioritised reading for every age group. Older pupils choose from a diverse range of texts and authors. Children in the early years are immersed in activities relating to their class stories. The school has made sure that staff who deliver the phonics curriculum are well trained. Pupils practise reading from books which contain the sounds that they have learned. Where pupils struggle with reading, the school makes sure that they receive the help that they need to develop into confident and successful readers.

Staff have been trained to quickly identify additional needs that pupils may have. Pupils with SEND receive appropriate support. Teachers make necessary adaptations to their teaching to enable pupils with SEND to learn successfully.

Pupils and children in the early years display a real thirst for learning. They follow clear routines which enable them to move around the school sensibly and safely. The school prioritises attendance. It takes rigorous actions to ensure that, over time, rates of attendance continue to improve.

The school places a strong focus on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about their own emotional health and how they can express their thoughts and feelings. They learn about keeping safe outside of school, including the potential risks when they are online. Pupils know how to keep themselves physically healthy and they can identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. However, pupils do not learn about British Values or other religions and cultures in enough depth. Consequently, they do not have a confident understanding of these topics. The school offers pupils a wide range of clubs such as cricket, football and choir. These opportunities help them to develop and share their talents and interests with others.

The governing board has a range of expertise which helps it support the school effectively. Governors are committed to the school's improvement. They understand the school's priorities and carry out their roles effectively.

Staff are extremely positive about the school. They appreciate their views being sought when any changes are being considered. Staff feel that there is an exciting new chapter starting for the school now and they are proud to be a part of this.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a few subjects, the school has not ensured that the specific building blocks of knowledge are clear enough to teachers. In these subjects, teachers are hindered in designing learning that supports pupils to build logically on what they already know. The school should ensure that teachers are clear about the specific knowledge that pupils should learn in every subject.
- In some subjects, staff do not provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to revisit their prior learning. This means that some pupils struggle to recall what they have been taught previously. The school should provide staff with the support that they need to help pupils to revisit key information so that their knowledge builds securely over time.

- The school has not ensured that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of some different faiths and cultures. They also have a limited understanding of the importance of British Values. This prevents some pupils from having sufficient knowledge about the diversity of modern Britain. The school should ensure that they design and implement a suitable programme so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

## 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>	104782
<b>Local authority</b>	St Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347905
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	461
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Phil Conway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Kearney
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leghvale.st-helens.sch.uk">www.leghvale.st-helens.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The school manages a breakfast and after school club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, art and design and history. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Ruth Moran, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Barraclough

Ofsted Inspector

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