

# Inspection of Leigham Primary School

Cockington Close, Leigham, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8RF

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 December 2024

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Barker. This school is part of Connect Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Stuart Bellworthy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Mitchell.

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

Pupils are proud to be part of this warm and nurturing school. Strong relationships form the bedrock upon which the school builds its work. Staff know the pupils and their families well. This enables the school to meet the individual needs of its pupils very effectively. Pupils thrive at this happy school.

The school has created a culture of high expectations for pupils' achievement, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard to meet these expectations. They enjoy learning and are eager to participate in lessons. Pupils often achieve very well.

There are clear routines and high expectations for behaviour. Pupils rise to meet them. Around the school and during playtimes, pupils behave sensibly and show respect and kindness towards adults and each other. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils relish the opportunities provided to develop their character and leadership skills. They make a positive contribution to school life in their various roles. This includes being planet protectors, play leaders or representing the school at sport. Staff ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to participate in these roles and activities.

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

The school has an ambitious and well-thought-out curriculum, starting in the early years. Leaders take a meticulous approach to evaluating teaching and learning. They know precisely what is working well and where they need to make further improvements. The school makes sure that pupils have an equal chance to succeed. For example, it identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff choose activities carefully when deciding how to teach the curriculum. Where pupils need extra individual support, the school is quick to provide the help that they need. This helps many pupils to overcome considerable obstacles to their learning.

Pupils develop their knowledge and skills well across most wider curriculum subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils struggle to recall their learning. This is because the school's strategies to embed learning in pupils' long-term memory in these subjects are in their infancy.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils begin to learn to read as soon as they start school. There is a strong focus on developing children's communication and language skills in the early years. This helps them build self-confidence and gain the vocabulary they need for future learning. Staff have the expertise to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. The school identifies pupils who need extra support. These pupils receive the help they need. Reading books match pupils' phonics knowledge accurately. This supports pupils to read with fluency. Teachers read and discuss high-quality texts with their classes. Initiatives such as 'A weekend away with...', when pupils take a book and a hot chocolate home with them, create excitement

about reading. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the book reviews they share with their classes. Pupils develop a passion for reading.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Disruptions to learning are rare. Pupils of all ages get on well with one another. Leaders have placed high importance on working closely with families to improve attendance and punctuality. The school communicates well with families. It offers support, including from outside agencies, when required. Strategies to improve pupils' rates of attendance have been successful. Consequently, fewer pupils are frequently absent from school.

The school's programme for personal development is exceptional. There is a sharp focus on mental health and well-being. Pupils can become compassionate buddies. Staff train these pupils to provide support for their peers who are going through difficult times. The school prepares pupils well for their future careers. 'Dream big' is a theme running throughout the school. This provides pupils with insights into a myriad of careers. Pupils enthuse about the opportunities they may have in the future. The rich personal development programme exposes pupils to different faiths, cultures and lifestyles. Consequently, they are prepared for life in modern Britain very well. Pupils blossom academically, socially and emotionally at this school.

The school benefits from highly effective leadership. The trust and local governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what can be further improved. Trustees and governors use their expertise to provide appropriate support and challenge to the school. Leaders ensure that staff access high-quality training, which helps them to develop their subject knowledge and continually improve the curriculum. Staff are overwhelmingly proud to work at the school. They hugely appreciate the steps taken to support their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, the strategies that the school uses to ensure pupils remember important knowledge are in their infancy. Consequently, some pupils struggle to remember their learning over time. The trust should ensure that, in all subjects, appropriate strategies are used to enable pupils to secure the knowledge they need for the next stage of their education.

## 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>	143308
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344766
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	399
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ian Mitchell
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Stuart Bellworthy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Barker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leigham-primary.plymouth.sch.uk">www.leigham-primary.plymouth.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Connect Academy Trust.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club managed by the school.

## 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 evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection 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, subject leaders, the inclusion coordinator and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- An inspector listened to some pupils read to an 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 in lessons and at social times. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, their behaviour and their safety.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Burgess, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Shirley	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Hannon	Ofsted Inspector

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