

# Leigh Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103705
<b>Local Authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	308395
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Hodge

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	140
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Cutler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rod Steward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Plants Hill Crescent Tile Hill Coventry CV4 9RQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 464475
<b>Fax number</b>	02476 468878

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage, the progress that pupils make in English and the role that governors play in leading and managing the school. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and school documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, the governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but evidence gathered suggests that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are accurate, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller sized school than average. There is a wide social mix among pupils. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Children enter the school with levels of abilities that are broadly typical for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties/and or disabilities is higher than is found nationally, as is the number entitled to free school meals. The school has had three acting headteachers during the last two years. The current acting headteacher, who started in September 2007, is temporarily leading the school until August 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Leigh is a satisfactory school. It is emerging well from a prolonged period of disruption caused by several changes in leadership and staffing. The senior leaders are now steering the way forward steadily, while seeking to improve aspects of provision where possible. Pupils behave well and enjoy school as there is a caring ethos that helps them feel secure. The school is popular with parents. One comment was typical of many, 'The school does its very best to create a safe, fun and caring environment for the children.'

All pupils achieve satisfactorily. Children enter the school with broadly typical levels of skills and abilities. They settle in quickly and make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year. Provision is adequate for most areas of learning, but not for physical development. There are plans for a new outside activity area but children do not readily make use of the current space, as it is not very large or enticing. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This level of progress continues in Years 3 to 6. As a result, pupils reach broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school recognises the need to extend learning and further boost progress in these areas but recent changes to introduce more exciting activities are only just beginning to take effect. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' writing often lacks sparkle and fluency as it is hampered by weak spelling and a limited use of interesting words. In response, the school has started using drama work to enthuse pupils to write, which is beginning to help. Pupils notice an increasingly harder work rate set for them and are slowly starting to rise to the challenge. They make good progress in their information and communication technology (ICT) skills as they frequently use computers to aid their work.

Adults work hard to get to know pupils as individuals and they provide satisfactory levels of care, guidance and safeguarding. Extra support for vulnerable pupils, such as a lunchtime 'drop in club', and the 'friendship buddies' on the playground are helping them feel more confident about their learning. Parents are also encouraged to share in school life so they know how they can help their child's learning. An ethos of respect runs through the work of the school and pupils readily speak about feeling valued by staff. The good provision that the school makes for pupils' spiritual and moral development helps them have a good awareness of the needs of others. They have a good sense of right and wrong. This helps them to play and work harmoniously together. Pupils believe the school supports them well and they say they feel safe and enjoy attending. This is increasingly helping their personal qualities to develop, although they do not readily take the initiative within lessons or suggest ideas to improve the school. They try to adopt healthy lifestyles. One pupil said, 'I know that I should eat five bits of fruit or vegetables, but don't always manage it'. Pupils take regular exercise through games lessons, lively activities at playtimes and after school sports clubs. Pupils develop sound links with their local community, often taking part in special events such as harvest festivals and activities for Lent. They also work well with local police in developing 'friendship squads' to help improve community safety. The school councillors enjoy their responsibilities, although their influence on shaping the school's direction is limited, as they are unsure of their roles. A caring team of staff sets the friendly and supportive tone. This helps to ensure pupils develop into confident individuals, aiding their start in secondary schools.

Through the school, teaching is satisfactory. Positive relationships and encouraging pupils to work together well are good features to lessons. Some good quality teaching in Years 5 and 6 is making up for elements of past under achievement. For these year groups, innovative

approaches in drama and use of audio-visual whiteboards are helping pupils to become more confident in expressing their ideas. In other year groups, however, activities lack pace and sparkle as teachers spend too long explaining tasks rather than letting pupils respond with their ideas. This slows their progress, particularly in developing their speaking skills and a wider vocabulary. Teachers set high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond positively to these. The quality of teachers' day-to-day guidance to help pupils improve their work is becoming more effective. Target setting routines have started recently to aid pupils' progress, but not all pupils are fully clear what their targets are or how these can help them to improve. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They help to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their classmates. Adequate provision for basic skills promotes pupils' sound progress, and more exciting activities to extend their learning are just being implemented. A suitable range of after school clubs helps to enrich class based lessons.

The acting headteacher, who started last term, has succeeded in providing the stability needed following a long unsettled period with many staffing changes. Senior leaders have successfully re-evaluated areas of the school's work and made necessary changes. These include streamlining approaches to the teaching of reading and spelling to ensure better consistency between classes. Monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work takes place regularly, but does not fully focus on those steps needed to boost pupils' progress more quickly. Realistic targets are set and pupils generally meet them. Governors have 'weathered the storm' of recent disruptions, and are now developing a clearer vision for the school's future. They are beginning to set up regular visits to oversee how initiatives are working and to inform their realistic levels of self-evaluation. With the help of the local authority, they have reviewed aspects of the school such as staffing allocations and financial routines. Recent improvements demonstrate that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

The standards and quality of education in the Reception class are satisfactory. There are clear routines for introducing children into school. These enable them to settle in quickly and gain confidence in working in pairs and small groups. Progress is satisfactory in nearly all areas of learning and most children are on course to reach the levels expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. Senior leaders are developing a clear understanding of its strengths and weaker areas to remedy, such as using assessment more regularly and accurately. Staff have a good awareness of developing children's language, number and emotional needs, so activities to develop these aspects are well planned. Activities that promote their independence and physical skills are hampered by the limited space in the outside activity area. It is not enticing enough to encourage children to use it or large enough to stretch their physical abilities. Children behave well and show a good deal of enjoyment in their work. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and the way they settle into school confidently.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Give pupils in Years 3 to 6 more guidance on developing their writing skills, so they use a wider vocabulary, spell more accurately and write with greater fluency.
- Provide a more inviting and better resourced outside area in the Foundation Stage to develop children's independence and to extend their physical skills.

- Improve the monitoring of lessons and pupils' work to focus more sharply on those areas that will improve teaching and learning more quickly.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children

Inspection of Leigh CE Primary, Tile Hill CV4 9PQ

Thank you for making me feel welcome at your school when I visited it recently. Yours is a satisfactory school, which is trying to be even better. It has some good things about it.

Here are some of the things we found out

- Children in the Reception classes settle in well and quickly feel at home.
- You said you feel safe and all the staff make sure that you do; you said you like the 'caring' atmosphere and I noticed it too.
- You make satisfactory progress in your work and most of you reach the expected levels; your writing is not quite as good as your reading and mathematics work.
- Teachers explain things quite well but do not always give you enough time to talk about your exciting ideas to the class or each other.
- The activities you do in school, like using your 'creative room' for special projects, ICT, music and drama, are fun and interesting.
- Those of you on the school council enjoy your responsibilities and when become more confident of your roles I am sure you will be a great asset to your school.
- You know about keeping fit and active and you are trying to eat sensibly.
- You behave well at playtimes and you appreciate the 'friendship buddies' that help you; the school helps you become sensible and mature.
- The staff and governors are working hard to make sure that the school runs smoothly after all the changes that have taken place recently.

We have asked the school to do three things

- Help those of you in Years 3 to 6 to have more activities that help you to write exciting stories and improve your spelling.
- Provide the youngest children with a more exciting outside play area so they can really increase their activity levels and choose activities for themselves.
- Give the teachers more ideas about how they can help you learn even faster in lessons.

Best Wishes

Kevin Hodge Lead inspector

22 February 2008

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