

# Leigham Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133602
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	316164
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mo Roberts HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	341
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barry Harding
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Cockington Close Leigham Plymouth PL6 8RF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 790990
<b>Fax number</b>	01752 790690

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 February 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	316164

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. It has an average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Most pupils come from the immediate area of mixed council and private housing, although there are more who travel from further away to attend the school than at the last inspection. Children's attainment on entry is wide ranging and broadly at the level expected overall. Children attend the nursery class for either all mornings or all afternoons. The Phoenix out of School Club was inspected at the same time as the school and the report is available separately. The school has a Healthy School Award, the International School Award and one for Basic Skills.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Leigham Primary School provides a satisfactory education with many good features, notably in pupils' personal and creative development. Parents' comments about the school are overwhelmingly positive and show they are pleased that their children are well cared for and happy. Pupils benefit from a good curriculum that weaves subject areas together thematically and encourages an enthusiastic response. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school a lot and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They feel safe and develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Behaviour is good. Staff act swiftly and effectively if any pupil needs extra guidance in order to settle down and get on with their tasks. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community. They leave the school with basic skills that are well above average in science, at the expected level in mathematics but below the national average in English, especially at the higher level. The exceptionally good partnership with the local secondary school and other agencies ensures they all make a smooth transition to their next stage of their education.

The pupils' rate of progress is improving because the school is beginning to use assessment data more effectively to monitor progress and to assign extra help. Science standards have risen considerably and they have also risen in mathematics at the end of Year 6 recently. However, a small number of the more able pupils do not fulfil their full potential by Year 6 because in some of their previous classes they lacked challenge. The introduction of a more robust tracking system is making it easier to monitor individual progress and to take action on this issue. All pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and quite a few are doing better than this in their current work. However, a few pupils could still do better in some classes. This is because the individual targets set for them and marking of their work are not always precise enough to help them to improve their performance and reach their highest potential.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with elements that are good and sometimes outstanding, especially in science. All teachers explain clearly what pupils are to learn but teaching in some year groups sometimes slows the rate of progress for a few learners, particularly when work in groups is not closely enough matched to pupils' different needs. Pupils work cooperatively and respond well to being involved actively in subjects such as French, art and music. Teaching assistants play a strong role in supporting pupils who need extra help so they also learn as well as the other pupils in their classes. Pupils who are more vulnerable receive imaginative pre-emptive nurturing and support to ensure they settle and succeed in school. The Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with all children gaining good social skills and making a positive start to their learning.

Leadership is good and the headteacher and deputy ensure the school has a strong common purpose. The wrap-around care they have established for pupils assists parents and families. The family learning project builds a strong sense of cohesion between the school and the wider community. School self-evaluation is good, clearly identifies the priorities for development and is robustly tackling past underachievement. The school has made satisfactory progress on the issues outlined at the last inspection and is working on further improving the standards in writing. It has made strong advances through its willingness to be a leader in curriculum development. The good curriculum and the school's high standards in science show it has a good capacity to improve. The governors support the school very well, holding it to account and effectively challenging it to develop and improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactorily for children in the Foundation Stage, with children making at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They join the Nursery (FS1) with a wide range of attainment but most of these children get close to, or achieve, the goals expected for their age at the end of the Reception Year (FS2). The children who join in the school at the start of Reception do well from their individual starting points. Overall children's literacy skills are their weakest area. Planning is improving and children's awareness of how sounds and letters link is developing well. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and is often better. The good range of activities, including those that are child initiated, leads to high levels of enjoyment and sound learning. However, the use of the outdoor learning area is underdeveloped and has, for example, too few activities to stimulate an interest in writing. There are appropriate systems for checking what children can do when they join the Nursery but subsequent staff observations and evidence do not fully capture children's individual progress and enable staff to ensure maximum learning at all times. The new Foundation Stage coordinator has made a good start identifying areas for development. The staff are exceptionally good at ensuring children are emotionally secure and confident. This means that the transition to the next stage of learning in Year 1 is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, especially for the more able pupils.
- Make sure that marking and the targets set for pupils are always precise enough to help them to reach their highest potential.
- Ensure all teaching is of a consistently good standard and is closely matched to pupils' different needs to maximise all pupils' learning.

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.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Attainment on entry to the FS 2 classes is at about the expected level for those children who have attended the school's FS1 class. However, approximately a third of this year's cohort joined from other places and have more varied levels of attainment. All make at least steady progress and many do better than this so that almost all reach the expected goals at the end of the Reception Year. Children's skills in communication, language and literacy are relatively weaker than in other areas. In Year 1, pupils are currently achieving well. Standards by the end of Year 2 are at the national average, although they have varied year on year, owing in large part to staff changes. In 2007, the test results of Year 6 pupils were broadly in line with the national standards overall. However, very high standards in science masked some underperformance in English, especially for the more able pupils. Achievement in the current Year 6 is better. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress because of accurate assessment of their needs and the provision of effective support.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. In class and around the school, pupils' behaviour is good; they play safely with each other and are polite and confident when expressing their views. The spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils is a strong feature of the school. Pupils reflect on their responsibilities as caring citizens in interactive and thought-provoking school assemblies. They are keen to include everyone and enjoy seeing their achievements celebrated regularly. They have a good awareness and appreciation of different faiths and cultures, as shown through displays and the recently gained International Award for links with Ghana. As a Healthy School, pupils are well informed about good eating habits. They make sensible food choices at lunchtimes and participate well in the varied sporting activities offered to them. Regular fund raising for charities contributes to the pupils' strong community commitments. Although pupils have many good personal attributes, their current writing skills slightly undermine their otherwise good preparation for their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are always at least satisfactory and, in many cases, good or better. Lessons are well organised and managed. Teachers are increasingly working effectively across classes to meet the differing needs of the pupils in the year group. There is improved consistency in planning, although some work does not fully match the more able pupils' ability. When pupils are in groups of similar ability, there are times when some are not fully challenged. Pupils have increased confidence in their speaking ability because teachers focus effectively on this area of learning in lessons in all subjects. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and teachers succeed in making learning fun and in engaging pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are attentive and respond readily to teachers' instructions and questions. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support in lessons and in their special group work to enable them to move on steadily from their starting points.

Lessons are well balanced, with the right amount of pupil activity and teacher explanation. Teachers use humour and praise effectively to motivate and to encourage pupils to 'have a go' at new learning. In the best teaching, pupils are actively encouraged to assess their own learning, usually at the end of a lesson, and then teachers use this information in their subsequent planning. Teachers are conscientious in completing marking but they do not give clear enough guidance about what pupils must do to develop and improve their work. Similarly, pupils' targets are not always precise enough or well understood by pupils, slowing progress for some.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The recently reviewed curriculum has given it greater relevance for pupils and various subjects are now being used more effectively to support progress in English. The cross-curricular themes help to make learning particularly meaningful. The school makes good use of the local context whenever possible so history is more accessible to pupils. Good links with the community college and use of school resources ensure that skills in information and communication technology are developing appropriately. Displays and pupils' work illustrate the effective and varied

approaches used, particularly in history and art. There is a real emphasis on creativity. French is well established for older pupils and the school hopes to extend this to younger pupils shortly. All Year 5 pupils have opportunities to start to learn to play the clarinet, and some continue with this. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Many pupils participate in school productions. Sports sessions and the clubs, such as gardening and performing arts, are popular. Well-planned activity weeks, visits and residential stays make a major contribution to pupils' enjoyment of learning and to their personal development. Good curriculum planning ensures that the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those with specific gifts and talents, are considered. Parents receive good information about the curriculum so they can support their children's learning at home.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall and pupils learn in a spacious and attractive environment. Health, safety and safeguarding procedures are fully in place and the monitoring of behaviour and attendance is good. Parents are contacted promptly if a pupil does not arrive at school. Breakfast and after-school clubs, as well as the nurture group, are very valuable areas of provision for some pupils. Parents are particularly pleased about the caring ethos and one said, 'The school is a great starting block for life'. Pupils with identified needs and learning difficulties are cared for very well.

Exceptionally strong links with partner schools, the church and a range of outside agencies help ensure the welfare and safety of pupils. Pupils understand the school's assessment processes but are less sure how national curriculum levels relate to their progress. They do not all understand their targets well enough so the academic guidance they are given requires improvement. Year 6 pupils are confident about moving on to secondary school due because of the strong links with the secondary school staff who regularly visit and work with the school in relation to French and music.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and deputy are not afraid to innovate and to try various ways to tackle problems. They have looked at the root cause of some of the underachievement and set about dealing with it robustly and successfully. The headteacher works hard with the most vulnerable and helps all families to engage proactively in the education of their children. Resources are used well. The senior management team has taken a well-calculated risk in introducing a new management system to focus further on improving the standards. New middle management groups are in their early stages but have already sharpened the focus on ensuring that every pupil makes the maximum possible progress. Governance is strong. The chair of governors keeps an astute eye on developments and involves other governors well in challenging the school to make further improvement and explain its actions. The school's leadership is exceptionally effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and preparing them to be well-rounded individuals who have a strong potential to be good future citizens.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

22 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leigham Primary School, Leigham, Plymouth PL6 8RF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We appreciated the discussions we had with some of you and were impressed by your politeness and your enthusiasm for school. We found that Leigham Primary is a satisfactory school with many good features. These are the positive things we found.

- You are well behaved, work hard and most of you have good attendance.
- You do very well in science.
- All the staff look after you really well. Thank you for including everyone and thinking about each other's feelings. You do good work raising money to help other people.
- The teaching is always satisfactory and often better. This helps you to make steady progress in lessons.
- The curriculum is exciting, for example, all the book week activities, including your bedtime-story session. Your artwork is lovely and you have a real enthusiasm for learning French.

We have asked the staff to make some changes to help you do even better.

- Help you to raise the standard of your work in English. This is in writing for some of you and reading for some others, but is most especially for those of you who find it quite easy – we want to be sure that you can reach the highest levels possible for your age.
- Support your progress by selecting and explaining your individual targets very carefully to make sure that these help you improve as fast as you can. Also by making sure the teachers' marking gives you very clear ideas about how to improve as well as telling you how well you have done.
- Make sure that the work in lessons is always at just the right level for you, particularly when you are working in groups.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by doing your best. Well done on your healthy eating and on all the exercise you do to keep fit! I think you will be good future citizens because you are good at thinking about how to help each other, the community around your school and people in Ghana.

Best wishes from Mrs Roberts Her Majesty's Inspector

22 February 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Leigham Primary School, Leigham, Plymouth PL6 8RF**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We appreciated the discussions we had with some of you and were impressed by your politeness and your enthusiasm for school. We found that Leigham Primary is a satisfactory school with many good features. These are the positive things we found.

- You are well behaved, work hard and most of you have good attendance.
- You do very well in science.
- All the staff look after you really well. Thank you for including everyone and thinking about each other's feelings. You do good work raising money to help other people.
- The teaching is always satisfactory and often better. This helps you to make steady progress in lessons.
- The curriculum is exciting, for example, all the book week activities, including your bedtime-story session. Your artwork is lovely and you have a real enthusiasm for learning French.

We have asked the staff to make some changes to help you do even better.

- Help you to raise the standard of your work in English. This is in writing for some of you and reading for some others, but is most especially for those of you who find it quite easy – we want to be sure that you can reach the highest levels possible for your age.
- Support your progress by selecting and explaining your individual targets very carefully to make sure that these help you improve as fast as you can. Also by making sure the teachers' marking gives you very clear ideas about how to improve as well as telling you how well you have done.
- Make sure that the work in lessons is always at just the right level for you, particularly when you are working in groups.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by doing your best. Well done on your healthy eating and on all the exercise you do to keep fit! I think you will be good future citizens because you are good at thinking about how to help each other, the community around your school and people in Ghana.

Best wishes from Mrs Roberts  
Her Majesty's Inspector