

St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100617
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	323314
Inspection dates	25–26 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	197
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Mary Hawes
Headteacher	Mr Colin Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	42 Mitcham Lane Streatham London SW16 6NP
Telephone number	020 8769 2712

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	25–26 March 2009
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Fax number

020 8664 6025

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-size primary school. Pupils come from a variety of different backgrounds, with White British, Black Caribbean and Black African being the largest groups. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language has doubled over recent years and is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The majority of these pupils struggle with basic literacy and numeracy, need help to settle to work in class or need specific support with their learning. Recent building work has created a new inclusion centre and an additional classroom. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Leonard's Church of England Primary is a good school. Pupils develop good personal skills and are happy because the school provides an inclusive environment where they feel safe. Relationships are positive and the school works hard to ensure that pupils are well cared for and that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are well supported. There is good pastoral support, as pupils' strong personal development shows. Parents appreciate this aspect of the school's work. One wrote, 'It's a very caring school where the staff take a real interest in the children.' Pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe is outstanding, as is their contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils enjoy opportunities to contribute to school life by taking on responsibility for recycling, taking an active part in assemblies and helping with the smooth running of break-time. The school council helped to draw up the safety rules and rotas for the new play areas. Good sporting opportunities, including working with specialist sports coaches, clubs and the playground equipment, foster positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. This is reflected in the school's success in achieving the Healthy School award and the Activemark. One pupil said, 'The school council had the idea of the trim trail so children could climb, swing, slide and enjoy exercise.' Attendance is satisfactory. Many parents confirm that their children enjoy school. One commented, reflecting the views of others, 'My children enjoy coming to school and have a great time at St Leonard's.'

Visits made by staff to children's homes, and opportunities for children to visit the school with their parents and carers before they start in the Reception class, ensure that they settle quickly. Staff work closely with parents and carers. One parent wrote, 'The transition from Nursery has been extremely positive.' Children make good progress in the Reception class to achieve the levels expected by the start of Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in relation to their starting points in Years 1 to 6 and reach broadly average standards.

Teaching and the curriculum are good, and academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils appreciate the wide variety of work they are given. They enjoy opportunities to discuss their learning in pairs and to use computers in their learning. However, expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Consequently, some of the more able pupils are not always set appropriately challenging work to do. This is because information gained from tracking pupils' progress is not used routinely to plan the next steps in their learning. Marking and target setting are not always used to make clear to pupils how to improve their work. Visitors to the school, from the local emergency services for example, as well as a workshop day on personal safety for pupils in Year 6, foster pupils' extremely good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Success in achieving the London Children's Flower Society Premier Award and the London Environmental Award reflects pupils' strong commitment to protecting their environment. Workshops for parents and carers are helping them to support their children's learning at home.

Senior leaders have effectively overseen the challenges of recent building work to create an inclusion centre within the heart of the school. This will enable the school to meet the specific needs of all pupils. Parents praise the good leadership of the headteacher and the deputy. Self-evaluation is good, but some recently appointed leaders have not been in post long enough to have developed their roles or to take a systematic part in monitoring the quality of provision in order to bring about further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start the Reception class with a range of skills and capabilities that in the past have generally been below the expected levels for their age. Most recent records show that an increasing number are joining the school with the expected skills for four-year-olds. Caring support and warm relationships ensure that children make friends, treat each other with respect and become happy, confident learners. One parent of a child in the Reception class typically wrote, 'My child has made vast improvements both socially and in school work.' Adults ensure that children develop their skills well and make good progress. Opportunities for children to initiate play activities are well balanced with focused teaching tasks. The children have access to the outdoor area. However, the range of activities is sometimes restricted, which limits opportunities for all children to be appropriately challenged, particularly more able children. Leaders and managers are not fully involved in monitoring provision to identify priorities for development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use information from assessment, tracking and marking to plan work that is consistently suitably challenging, particularly for more able pupils, and ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Develop the roles of leaders and managers at all levels in closely monitoring the quality of provision in order to bring about further improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Over recent years, standards in tests at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average. Provisional results of tests at the end of Year 6 in 2008 show that a very large majority of pupils reached the expected standards for their age. However, few pupils reach the higher levels in these assessments. From starting points that were generally below expectations for their age, this represents good progress for these pupils. The school's own assessment data and work in pupils' books show that all groups of pupils are making good progress through the school. Pupils who find basic literacy and numeracy more difficult, those who need help in order to settle to their work and those who need specific extra help with their learning in lessons are well supported individually and in small groups, and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good gains in pupils' moral, social and cultural awareness enables them to show care and consideration for one another. Pupils' outstanding spiritual development is promoted through daily assemblies and close links with the local church. Charity fundraising develops pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than they are. Older pupils, in particular, thrive on responsibility, for example helping the younger ones at break-times and collecting paper for recycling from each classroom. This, together with their good progress in basic skills, prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy choices. They use the school garden to develop their understanding of healthy eating, and are proud that what they have grown has been used in the school kitchen. Pupils are keen to

participate in physical activities in order to keep themselves fit. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is generally extremely good and the pupils are very polite. However, in lessons where tasks are not consistently suitably matched to all pupils' needs, a minority of pupils do not always concentrate on their work as well as they should.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan interesting tasks that motivate pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to use computers in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 were using laptops to draw pictures and write words and text to create a class alphabet book. They enjoy opportunities to work with partners and to discuss their learning in pairs. This promotes their strong personal skills. For example, pupils in Year 4 enjoyed working in small groups to discuss solutions to various social problems. In most classes there is a wide range of ability, but information from assessment is not always used to plan work that is well matched to pupils' different needs. Pupils who struggle with basic literacy and numeracy, and those who need additional help with their learning in class, are generally well supported by additional adults who contribute effectively by working with small groups and individuals. However, in some classes most pupils are expected to do very similar work. This means that tasks are sometimes too easy for more able pupils and so they make less progress than they should.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Links between subjects are helping pupils to develop their skills across a range of subjects. For example, pupils in a Year 2 literacy lesson were developing their research and writing skills through exploring the life of Florence Nightingale. The school's Artsmark award is demonstrated through the high-quality artwork on display around the school. However, opportunities for pupils to practise joined-up handwriting skills are not consistent through the school. Consequently, work in pupils' books is not always of a similarly high quality. Themed weeks, including art and book weeks, bring the curriculum to life. Pupils appreciate visits to local places of interest and are enthusiastic about the annual Year 6 residential activity week in Surrey. There is a good range of well-attended clubs, including Wildlife Explorers, recorder club and a cookery club for pupils and their parents. The board games club promotes pupils' social skills well and helps pupils learning English as an additional language to develop their speaking and listening. Participation in local festivals, drama productions and concerts helps pupils to grow in self-esteem and self-confidence. More able pupils appreciate opportunities to develop their skills through Saturday and half-term workshops at local schools and museums.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care arrangements in the school are good. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' health, safety and welfare are robust. Through good links with a range of outside agencies, the school provides good support for pupils who need additional guidance as well as for their families. One parent typically commented, 'The school does everything it can to make the children happy in a caring environment.' Pupils are confident that staff will take appropriate action to help them should any problems occur. Pupils learning English as an additional language are well

supported and make good progress. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The progress pupils are making is checked regularly, which helps the school to track how well pupils are achieving. Nevertheless, information from assessments is not always used well to plan appropriately challenging tasks for all pupils, particularly for more able pupils. The quality of marking and the use of individual targets for pupils are uneven. As a result, they do not always make clear to pupils how to improve their work in order to move on to the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governing body is supportive and committed. Governors regularly monitor aspects of the school's work in order to support the school in developing further. Other managers are developing their roles but have not been in post long enough to monitor the quality of provision in order to bring about further improvement. Pupils' understanding of themselves as part of the school and local community is good. Pupils participate in the local carnival and raise funds for local charities, and the choir sings at a variety of local venues. One parent wrote, 'The school strongly emphasises respect among all the different backgrounds of pupils.' This, together with pupils' good awareness of those who live in other national and global communities, promotes community cohesion well.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which 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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, London, SW16 6NP

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. St Leonard's Church of England Primary is a good school.

These are the best things about your school.

- Your academic and personal achievements are good.
- Teaching is good.
- You enjoy school and many of your parents told us they like the school a lot too.
- You really like the opportunities you have to take on responsibility in the school.
- You get on well with each other and with the adults.
- You know why it is important to keep yourselves fit and you have an extremely good awareness of how to keep yourselves safe.
- You do a good job in raising money for charity, which shows you care about those who are less fortunate than you.
- You benefit from an exciting curriculum and like all the activities.
- The adults make sure that you are cared for, helped and kept safe.
- Your school is well led and managed.

To get even better, we have asked the school to make sure that the teachers always plan work that is at just the right level of difficulty for you. You can help by letting your teachers know if you could manage some more challenging work. We have asked your teachers to give you more ideas about how you can improve when they mark your work and set you targets. We would also like more of the teachers to be involved in checking regularly on how things are going in the school.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Madeleine Gerard

Lead Inspector