

Leigh CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106445
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	336674
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila O'Keeffe

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Christine Doublet-Stewart
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Callaghan
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2006
School address	Henrietta Street Leigh Lancashire WN7 1LP
Telephone number	01942 671389
Fax number	01942 269797
Email address	enquiries@admin.leighcejunior.wigan.sch.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Inspection number	336674

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons and 14 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and local authority representatives. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at assessment records, teachers' planning, school improvement plans, records of local authority monitoring visits and 95 questionnaire responses from parents and carers as well as responses from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement and attainment of all pupils in English, mathematics and science, particularly mathematics
- the quality of teaching and how assessment is used to ensure that rapid progress is made in learning and in raising attainment
- whether the leaders and managers of the school are demonstrating the capacity to initiate and sustain improvements.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average junior school situated in the town centre. The pupils attend from the local area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Over the last four years there has been a significant turnover in the leadership of the school. The current headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

The school has gained a number of awards including National Healthy School status, Active Mark and Silver Artsmark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in pupils' learning and progress and their attainment in writing, mathematics and science.

The school has a number of positive features but since the last inspection there has been a decline in attainment. Following a period of considerable disruption to the leadership, the school is now in a more settled phase. The experienced and respected headteacher, together with the assistant headteachers, is providing vision, stability and clear direction for improvement. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and the school is aware of what needs to be done to bring about further improvement. A plan for raising attainment is being implemented, with support from the local authority. A good start has been made in improving teaching and assessment, particularly in the teaching of mathematics. Teaching is currently satisfactory but this has not been the case in the past, with the result that progress from pupils' initial starting points has been inadequate. Attainment in Year 6 is now broadly average and progress is accelerating. There remain pockets of underachievement and inadequate progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now reaching average levels of attainment and making satisfactory progress. Improvements have been made in the quality of teaching and assessment but further work is being done to raise attainment more quickly, combating the legacy of underachievement. The effect of the actions taken by the school to secure improvement so far, together with the strengthening of middle leadership with the appointment of two assistant headteachers, contribute to the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Pupils enjoy good relationships with staff and with each other. Their social and moral development is good and they behave well. They are enthusiastic about learning. When lessons are enjoyably challenging and of good quality, pupils respond with interest and make good progress. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. They have a good awareness of how to live healthy lifestyles and enjoy opportunities to contribute to their school and the wider community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make much better progress and attain higher standards in writing, mathematics and science by:

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- checking pupils' progress so that targets for individuals, groups and the whole school can be reviewed to ensure that they are sufficiently challenging.
- Raise the quality of teaching to good or better by:
 - adapting teaching plans to more closely match the needs of individual pupils
 - increasing the pace of lessons by decreasing the amount of time pupils sit listening to the teacher, and allowing pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - providing further training for staff to enable them to develop a wider variety of teaching styles and a better understanding of the effective use of assessment
 - developing a consistent marking policy that helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

When lessons are interesting and provide suitable challenge, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. For example, pupils were engaged and enjoyed a practical mathematics lesson in which they learnt about accurate measurement. However, too many pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to progress as quickly as they should. There has been recent improvement in Year 6 to enable pupils to reach standards of attainment that are at the national average. However, pupils' achievement is inadequate overall because their underachievement in the past has not yet been overcome. Attainment has declined over the last three years in mathematics, science and writing. Reading is stronger across the school, especially in Year 6. The recent improvements in support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities means they now have work which is more closely matched to their needs and are now demonstrating improved learning and progress.

Pupils' attendance is above average. Most pupils commented that they felt safe in school. Behaviour in class, around school and at playtime is good. To help pupils in the restricted space in the playgrounds, break times are staggered and pupils are provided with an interesting and enjoyable range of games and equipment. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school.

Pupils have a good understanding of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle and are aware of the dangers associated with, for example, the misuse of drugs and use of the internet. Pupils take on roles and responsibilities that involve them in making decisions. The school council was active in bringing about the improvements made to the playground. The school's provision ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, pupils were actively engaged and enjoyed exploring their feelings and expressing their thoughts during a personal, social and health education lesson about belonging. The curriculum provides adequate opportunities for pupils to learn about different ethnic, faith and socio-economic groups.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Its quality ranges from good to inadequate; it is not yet strong enough to help pupils overcome the legacy of underachievement. Pupils make good progress in the best lessons because the pace and level of challenge are appropriate. They are involved throughout because well planned and interesting activities are closely matched to their abilities. In most lessons, relationships between staff and pupils are good and constructive. Pupils make less progress where activities are not based on accurate assessments of the levels they are working at and are either too simple or too difficult. Where pupils are expected to listen to their teacher for too long before starting their work, the pace of learning slows. Most teachers assess pupils' understanding, but sometimes this is not used well enough to advance pupils' learning. Marking is not consistently clear enough to help pupils improve their work.

The curriculum is adequately planned and gives pupils good enrichment opportunities through music tuition, sport and residential visits. All Year 4 pupils have guitar lessons. The extra-curricular activities are well attended and pupils talk enthusiastically about them. It is clear these are very positive experiences.

There is a satisfactory coverage of all subjects, but the school has rightly identified that the curriculum needs to be more creative and exciting to engage pupils further and raise attainment. Some changes have already been made; for example, providing pupils with greater opportunities to write in a variety of situations. This has resulted in

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

improvements to attainment in English this year. There is a good emphasis on healthy lifestyles.

Staff know pupils well, are very caring and form good relationships with them. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe the school keeps their children safe. Potentially vulnerable pupils receive good support. Arrangements for those joining the school and transferring to secondary school ensure pupils feel comfortable. The school's welcoming atmosphere reflects the Christian values on which it is based.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, soon after his appointment, provided the vision and action required for the improvement that the school needed. Leaders and the governing body have a realistic picture of the school's weaknesses. Senior leaders are now more accountable for improvement. An internal review of the school's effectiveness in 2009 led to the provision of support from the local authority, resulting in some improvements in teaching and in attainment and progress within the current Year 6. This support continues although, as yet, there is limited evidence of impact across all year groups.

Through the plan for raising attainment, school leaders demonstrate commitment to ensuring that pupils have an equal opportunity to do well. The governing body is now fully informed and in a better position to support and challenge the school, particularly through the raising attainment committee.

The school has improved communications with parents and carers; a good example of this is the text messaging service and the new prospectus. Local community links are developing well, with established work between the school and outside agencies. Links with two infant schools help to ensure continuity of support when pupils start in Year 3. Some work has started to promote pupils' awareness of the wider world and develop their understanding of other cultures but this is at an early stage. The school's procedures for safeguarding meet current requirements. The school provides inadequate value for money because the outcomes for pupils are inadequate.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are happy with their child's experience of school. Their view is that their children enjoy school and are well cared for. Almost a third of parents feel the school does not involve them in their children's learning and keep them informed about their progress. Inspectors followed up the negative comments made, and taking into account their own observations, documentation and discussion with the headteacher, they found procedures were in place to strengthen communication with parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leigh CofE Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 350 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	40	54	56	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	36	38	57	59	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	16	55	57	18	19	6	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	26	52	54	13	14	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	24	64	67	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	13	51	53	27	28	4	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	15	70	73	11	11	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	16	66	69	6	6	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	18	67	70	6	6	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	15	54	56	11	11	10	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	11	56	58	15	16	6	6
The school is led and managed effectively	17	18	65	68	5	5	5	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	26	58	60	6	6	4	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leigh CofE Junior School, Leigh, WN7 1LP

I would like to thank you all for making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. You were very polite and we enjoyed listening to your opinions. The reason for our visit was to find out how good an education you receive. Recently there have been some improvements in helping you to improve your learning. We found that overall it could be better and have therefore given the school a 'notice to improve'. This means that over the next year or so inspectors will visit again to see how well the school is doing. There are some good things about your school:

- you enjoy coming to school and have above average attendance
- you are polite and friendly and behave well in class
- adults look after you well and help you if you are worried or upset
- you enjoy your music and sport.

However, there are some important things the school needs to improve. We have asked you headteacher and governors to:

- ensure that you make better progress so you can reach higher levels in your writing, mathematics and science
- improve the quality of teaching to good or better so that you all have every chance to work at the right level for you, experience exciting activities and be more involved in your own learning.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sheila O'Keeffe

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.