

St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123179
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340301
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sarah Kilvington
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Godden and Mrs Lesley Alcorn
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed the school's work, including 22 lessons involving a total of 14 teachers. Meetings were held with the joint headteachers, staff with responsibilities for particular aspects of the school's work, governors and pupils. Inspectors met informally with parents at the end of the school day and received 102 completed parental questionnaires. They scrutinised documentation, such as records kept on pupils and school policies.

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

- the quality of the start given to children of Nursery and Reception age
- the match of teaching and the curriculum to pupils' needs in Years 1 to 6 to see how well their progress is supported, particularly in writing and mathematics
- the extent to which pupils of all ages contribute to the school community and the depth of their understanding of cultural diversity
- how well subject leadership and governance have developed since the last inspection.

Information about the school

Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups being those of White British and Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils' needs cover a wide range including moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social problems, and physical disabilities. The school has a number of awards for aspects of its work and recently gained the International Award and Bronze Eco-Award.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage includes Reception classes in the main school buildings and Nursery classes located in the nearby East Street Children's Centre. There is a breakfast club managed by the governors.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Leonard's Church of England Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and is striving to become even better. It has improved steadily since its last inspection, maintaining the pace of development noted at that time. Good leadership, management and teamwork are at the heart of the school's success. Accurate self-evaluation results in the staff sharing common goals and working relentlessly for the benefit of all pupils. An emphasis on working together is also evident among the pupils. As one commented, 'Everybody works as a team and nobody is left out.' The parents feel valued too and part of the partnership. Almost all parents agree with the view expressed by one that, 'Any concerns are shared and dealt with well.'

From low starting points, all groups of pupils achieve well so that their attainment is close to average by the end of Year 6. Good progress is made throughout Years 1 to 6 because teaching is good. Some of the teaching in these years is outstanding, although occasionally teaching is satisfactory. In all lessons in Years 1 to 6, teachers and other adults are clear about what pupils need to learn next and provide activities that support the achievement of these goals. Where the teaching is exceptionally good it is characterised by really high expectations of what pupils are capable of doing and understanding. Very effective opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to shape the activities. In the relatively less effective teaching, whole-class sessions are sometimes a bit too long and some opportunities are missed for the active participation of pupils. While teaching assistants are always used well when pupils work individually or in groups, they are not always used fully to support learning in whole-class sessions. The school agrees that it should make greater use of the expertise within the school, for example by enabling teachers to coach each other so that the overall quality of teaching can move even higher.

Children of Nursery age get off to a good start. They settle well because of the good links with parents established at the outset and a strong focus on their personal and learning needs. Progress for children of Reception age is slower than in other years. This is because the direct teaching and interactions with children when they are involved in independent activities are not as securely based on accurate assessment of learning needs as they are in other years.

The school has good capacity to improve further. Since the last inspection it has crossed grade boundaries in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. It has also built on areas that were already strengths, such as the care for all pupils, including the most vulnerable, and the provision of a rich curriculum. While features of care are outstanding and pupils really enjoy school, attendance is lowered by the incidence of holidays in term time and this is causing the attendance rate to fall.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up progress in the Reception Year by making better use of accurate assessments of each child's current attainment to support their next steps in learning during direct teaching and independent activities.
- Ensure that teaching in Years 1 to 6 always promotes good progress at all stages in a lesson by:
 - ensuring that whole-class sessions proceed at a good pace with opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in all activities
 - involving teaching assistants at all stages of the lesson to support learning
 - sharing good practice across the school.
- Work closely with parents and community leaders to reduce holidays in term time.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils love learning and are keen to do well. This is evident in all lessons when pupils apply themselves fully to tasks individually, in pairs or groups. Pupils in Year 4, for example, discussed the key points sensibly with their partners as they made notes from a text. Pupils' attentiveness is most evident and their progress most rapid when teaching is highly focused with many opportunities for them to be actively involved, whether it is to solve problems in mathematics in pairs in Year 6 or to suggest how computers might be used to prepare a report in Year 2. Learning proceeds most rapidly in lessons that engage pupils at every point through the pace of activities and the subject matter selected. In Year 5, for example, pupils paid rapt attention as the teacher read a story and thought carefully about the meanings of phrases as they discussed them in pairs. The school's successful promotion of these positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons ensures that pupils, including those with learning difficulties or English as an additional language, achieve well in Years 1 to 6 in writing, mathematics and more generally.

Behaviour is not only good in lessons but also around the school. Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful towards others. Although there are pupils whose behaviour can be challenging at times, they respond well to the school's support and make progress just as well as others. Pupils from all backgrounds mix well and the school is racially harmonious. Pupils have a good awareness of cultural diversity and are pleased to see those with physical disabilities involved in all that the school does. All in all, pupils are well prepared for their future lives through their development of a good approach to work and skills in teamwork.

Pupils relish responsibility, for example as members of the pupil council representing the views of others and as playground buddies and play leaders. A considerable contribution is made to the wider community, through links with a special school and by raising substantial funds for charities. The school's recent Eco-Award is evident in pupils' awareness of environmental issues.

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Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle well reflecting the school's Healthy School status. They respond particularly well to the many opportunities to keep fit through sport and physical education. They know what constitutes a healthy diet and, for example, Year 2 pupils speak knowledgeably about the minerals and vitamins in vegetables. Although pupils have chosen to have only healthy food in the school tuck shop, not all make consistently healthy choices about what they will eat.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school is able to point to many striking examples of the effectiveness of its support for vulnerable pupils. Arrangements are good for supporting children's transition into Reception from the Nursery provision located away from the main site. Particularly effective support is given for transfer to secondary education. The breakfast club provides good care. Although many efforts are already made to promote good attendance at school, further action is necessary to overcome a recent dip in attendance that has resulted from an increased incidence of holidays in term time as well as illness. Not only is teaching successful in promoting good enjoyment and achievement, but the

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

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curriculum also plays a significant part in this. In their responses to the pupil questionnaire, pupils enthusiastically told inspectors about the visits they have been on, with a recent trip to Oxford on the train particularly memorable for many. Opportunities to visit Hungary and Spain, as well as the Year 5 pupils' current study of India, reflect the International Award gained by the school. Some good links between subjects make learning more meaningful, such as those arising from Year 2 pupils' work on the local area, including their visit to the farmers' market. These links are successful in motivating pupils to write. With mathematics standards having been a little lower than those in English recently, the school agrees there is a need to focus even more on mental calculation within the mathematics curriculum. Good provision in physical education and music makes a substantial contribution to personal development, as well as skills in these subjects. Personal, social and health education is good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The joint headteachers work well together to galvanise the staff on the right priorities, embedding ambition and driving improvement. Subject leadership has developed well since the last inspection. Subject leaders speak knowledgeably about pupils' progress and of the school's action to tackle weaknesses and ensure that any pupils who fall behind are helped to catch up. The subject leaders for English and mathematics are strong practitioners in their own subjects. They are not used fully, however, to move relatively less effective teaching to a level as good as the best.

Governors are committed and supportive and know what the school's main strengths and weaknesses are. They represent the diversity of the school community and provide a satisfactory level of challenge for senior leaders. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school is a cohesive community in which diversity is valued and it is also outward looking. It has forged links with schools in rural locations and pupils visit a variety of places of worship. They also engage with people in the community through, for example, salsa dancing with senior citizens. The school recognises, however, that its promotion of community cohesion could develop further, for instance, by developing more diverse links with other countries.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good. As a result, many pupils told inspectors that they feel safe, pointing out ways in which the security of the school site has improved. Action taken to move the school forward since the last inspection has ensured

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that the school is now good at promoting equality of opportunity and tackling of discrimination. A particularly striking example of how well the school ensures good achievement is the highly effective work of the bilingual support assistants.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for Nursery children meets their needs well and begins to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills, although these remain considerably below those expected except in personal, social and emotional development. Expectations for good behaviour are established effectively and children are good, for instance, at tidying away at the end of sessions. Planning to meet children's needs is well focused on promoting their progress in all areas of learning and there is good planning for use of the outdoor environment.

In Reception, although there is planning for all areas of learning, the focus on children's individual learning needs is less secure. The use of assessment information to plan the next steps in children's learning is not as effective as in the Nursery. For example, it does not ensure that direct teaching is always pitched at the right level or help adults in making well-chosen interactions with children as they work and play independently. As a result, progress is only just satisfactory and the gap between attainment on entry to Reception and age-related expectations is not closing. Nevertheless, the bilingual assistant provides excellent support for children at an early stage of learning English.

The school's senior leaders agree that Reception provision has not improved at the same rate as that across the rest of the school. An action plan is in place and satisfactory

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steps are being taken to address this.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents who made their views known to inspectors are pleased with all aspects of the school's work. A few expressed concerns that they do not have the same access to the school building as they used to have at the start of the school day. Inspectors judge that the school has a balanced approach to ensuring pupils' safety at all times and to welcoming parents into school. They agree with parents that school's partnership with them is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Leonard's Church of England Primary 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 102 completed questionnaires by 13.00 on Day 1 of the inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	70	28	27	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	62	61	35	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	56	43	42	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	60	39	38	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	67	30	29	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	62	30	29	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	46	49	48	4	4	0	0
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)	42	41	47	46	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	57	38	37	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	57	34	33	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	44	46	45	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	57	38	37	0	0	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	69	30	29	0	0	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, Banbury OX16 4SB

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, watching your lessons and looking at your work. You made us feel very welcome.

We found out that St Leonard's is a good school. It provides you with many interesting and enjoyable activities both in lessons and at other times. You have some fantastic opportunities to go on visits. We really enjoyed hearing about the trip to Oxford on the train. We were amazed by your visits to Hungary and Spain.

You make good progress at St Leonard's because teaching is good and the curriculum is enjoyable. The adults care for you well. They do a lot to keep you safe and also help you make healthy choices. You do much for your school and for the community. Well done for raising funds for charities to help other people.

Your headteachers do a good job leading your school. The adults all work well as a team to improve your school. They have made many improvements since inspectors last visited. We have asked them to work on these things in particular now so that your school can be even more successful.

- Speed up the progress of children in the Reception classes. This is because they do not learn as quickly as the rest of you.
- Make sure that every part of every lesson is good. This means that there will always be opportunities for you to be involved in activities and learning well.
- Improve the school's attendance rate. Just lately it has not been as good as it was because some of you are going on holiday during the term time.

You can help by continuing to work hard and being such pleasant young people.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector

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