School report

Inspection of Leigh Primary School

The Green, Leigh, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8QP

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	**Requires improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Requires improvement**
Early years provision	**Requires improvement**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Leigh Primary School are happy and well looked after. They feel safe from bullying and trust that staff will always listen and help them if they have any concerns. Pupils value these relationships that they build with adults at the school.

Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They encourage and support pupils to be kind and considerate to others. For example, staff reward pupils who demonstrate the school's shared values of 'ACT RIGHT'. These values are clearly visible in the way pupils act and the choices they make. Older pupils relish opportunities to interact with younger pupils during breaktimes, demonstrating positive behaviours and relationships.

Leaders want the best for pupils and aim to make school varied and interesting. Parents and carers value the work of staff at the school. As one parent wrote, 'the teachers and leadership genuinely care about developing well-rounded, confident and responsible children'. However, not all pupils learn to read as quickly as they could. Also, pupils are not helped to learn and remember as much as they could in some other subjects as they move through the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Not all pupils are well supported to read confidently quickly. Over time, leaders have not ensured that the teaching of phonics is consistent and of high quality. Staff use a range of schemes and approaches, which leads to gaps in what pupils are taught and learn. Pupils are not always helped to select books to read that are matched to the sounds they know. Pupils who fall behind are not yet provided with sufficient time to read in school to catch up quickly.

Staff think carefully about how to teach lessons that are interesting. Story time is popular with pupils and provides them with rich opportunities to excitedly discuss books being read to them. Mathematics plans show clearly what is taught and how from Reception Year through to Year 6. However, leaders have not yet clearly planned the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it in all subjects. In some subjects, for example physical education (PE), plans are not yet focused on how knowledge and skills build over time. In geography, planning does not set out what pupils need to learn in sufficient detail. In some other subjects, curriculum plans and teaching do not emphasise or systematically revisit the most important things pupils should learn. Consequently, pupils do not remember important knowledge as well as they could.

Leaders do not yet have clear oversight of what the curriculum strengths and priorities for development are. Not all staff are trained to teach the knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to know and remember more in each year group.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included across the different aspects of school life. However, not all pupils with SEND have

work adapted to meet their specific needs. For example, what is taught does not always build closely enough on their prior learning and focus on the most important next steps.

In lessons and during breaktimes, pupils' behaviour is good. Even the youngest children know the expectations for behaviour both inside and outside the classroom, including crossing the road responsibly. Staff are consistent in their approaches to creating calm and orderly lessons, and disruption to lessons is very rare. Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and try their best.

Pupils' personal development is carefully promoted. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their talents and interests through a variety of clubs offered both during lunchtimes and after school, including football and French club. Pupils enjoy whole-school assemblies that cover a wide range of relevant topics, such as democracy. They have further opportunities during each week to discuss these topics in an age-appropriate way in class discussions with trusted adults.

Staff are proud to be members of the school. One member of staff described the school as 'a community within a community', which highlights the efforts made by all staff to make everyone feel welcome and supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. They pass on any concerns they have about pupils to the right people without delay. Leaders make appropriate checks that members of staff are suitable to work with children. Staff understand the local context and work hard to develop strong relationships with the families in their school community. They receive sufficient training to support them to identify and help any pupils they have concerns about. Pupils learn about how to stay safe in a range of contexts, including managing the risks of the online world.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of phonics is not providing all pupils with the opportunity to learn to read. Pupils who are falling behind are not yet supported to catch up by working with highly trained teaching staff. Leaders should implement their plans for improving phonics teaching without delay. This includes checking that staff follow the agreed sequence and methodology for teaching phonics.
- The curriculum plans for all subjects do not yet precisely outline what should be taught and when it should be taught. Pupils are not building a coherent understanding within the subjects they are taught. Leaders should carefully refine their curriculum plans to identify the specific content that is taught within each subject. Leaders should also carefully consider the order in which it is taught so

that pupils are supported to know more, remember more and do more as a result of the taught curriculum.

- Staff have not received sufficient training to plan and deliver an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. Pupils' learning of the wider curriculum is inconsistent across the school. Leaders should provide training for all staff to help all pupils make consistently strong progress across all subject areas.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	118278
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10200888
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rahim Rajan
Headteacher	Jenna Halfhide
Website	www.leighprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There have been significant changes in school leadership since the last inspection, including a recently appointed headteacher and chair of the governing body.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school and members of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, pupil premium and catch-up funding plans and relevant school policies.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. This involved inspectors talking to subject leaders, class teachers and

pupils, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and listening to pupils read. Inspectors also looked at subject planning in personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and geography.

- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views. They considered 76 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 46 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 12 responses to the staff survey.
- As part of inspecting early years, inspectors met with the early years leader and made visits to the Reception class.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by looking at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and also a local authority adviser.

Inspection team

Hanna Miller, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Bowes	Ofsted Inspector

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