

St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Overthorpe Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 4SB

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Ambitious leadership sets high expectations for pupils and staff. Everyone is helped to do their best and as a result academic standards are average and rising.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall. Lessons are well planned and lead to pupils making good progress. Pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Teachers are effective as they deliver exciting lessons across a range of subjects. They regularly check the progress that each pupil is making.
- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers. This helps them to provide good challenge and support for different groups of pupils.
- Provision for children in the early years foundation stage is good. Children make strong progress, especially in developing their reading and speaking and listening skills. They use them to quicken their progress in other areas of learning.
- Pupils' abilities to solve problems in mathematics are not developed sufficiently quickly. They do not use calculation strategies in everyday situations.
- Pupils are well behaved, reflective and highly caring towards each other. They are, rightly, proud of their school and work very hard. They show great respect for each other, for all staff and their environment.
- The school keeps pupils safe and teaches them how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.
- Leaders make sure that pupils get the support and challenge they need. This has improved the school's performance.
- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors now provide the right level of support and challenge to help drive improvement. They use the detailed information they are given to make effective checks on the work of the school.
- Tasks do not always stretch pupils. Consequently, writing skills are not as strong as reading because pupils do not develop their writing enough in different subjects.
- Some teachers do not give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work and this slows the progress they make.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers:
 - adjust the level of challenge and ensure the wider use of writing in other subjects to develop pupils' writing skills more quickly
 - test and challenge pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics by making sure they use calculation strategies in different contexts
 - give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work, in line with the school's marking and feedback policy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have high expectations. They communicate the vision and ambition for the school in a calm and encouraging manner. They regularly offer support where it will help and challenge colleagues when it is needed. Consequently, the school has improved since the previous inspection and its performance continues to improve.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and provides a secure basis for improvement. Leaders' judgements, both during the inspection and over time, align closely to the inspection findings. Plans are focused on the right priorities, and explain how these will be addressed. This enables leaders to accurately check on progress. However, planned actions do not always have precise measures of success, which limits the school's ability to assess the success of expected improvements.
- The roles of those who lead different subjects are developing well. Staff in these positions regularly monitor, evaluate and provide guidance for staff on how to improve further and therefore contribute successfully to improving pupils' progress.
- Staff performance is managed effectively through 'pupil progress meetings', looking at pupils' workbooks and observing teaching. All staff, including those who are new, are encouraged to openly discuss their strengths and areas for development with colleagues. This results in a culture of mutual support and professional development.
- Effective training from a range of sources also develops the skills of staff. This is well planned and monitored to ensure that expected improvements in teaching occur. There is also additional support for any staff member whose effectiveness is not yet as high as it could be.
- The curriculum is carefully planned through themes and topics. It takes into account the interests of the pupils as well as making sure that they learn the basic skills they need. There are opportunities to learn about life in other countries and in other cultures as well as what life is like in modern Britain. There are also opportunities to make learning more exciting, such as visits or events where pupils can broaden their experiences.
- British values are carefully promoted. Pupils learn about the importance of democracy through voting for members of the school council. Some pupils have also visited the Houses of Parliament. Pupils learn about the rule of law by drawing up rules to help the school run smoothly and support each other in making the right choices about how to behave in different situations.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In whole-school assemblies, pupils learn the importance of resilience and perseverance when things get hard, not only through stories but also by sharing their own experiences and feelings. Assemblies often have a moral theme and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils also have an opportunity to learn about a range of other faiths. Cultural development is strong; pupils have the opportunity to develop their music skills.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is monitored closely. The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to support those pupils who need extra help. School leaders and

governors regularly evaluate the impact of this spending to ensure that there is good value for money. Eligible pupils benefit from a range of support that is carefully targeted to their needs. If a pupil is not making progress the type of support is adapted to something more effective; for example, some pupils benefit from individual tuition.

- The primary sport premium funding is used effectively to enhance the school's already good-quality provision. Visiting specialist coaches develop staff and pupils' skills and increase pupils' participation in competitive team sports. Pupils who met inspectors were very keen to explain how important it is to keep fit and healthy, and how much they liked taking part in sporting opportunities.
- The local authority has supported the school effectively in establishing strong leadership and ensuring that governors are in a better position to help school leaders to implement improvement plans.

Governance of the school

- Governors are closely involved in the life of the school and all have specific areas of responsibility within the school improvement plan for aspects including safeguarding and pupil premium spending. They visit the school regularly to evaluate its work for themselves. The governing body has a broad and complementary set of skills. They are well trained and regularly review how much progress pupils are making. They take a particular interest in pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, and challenge leaders about pupil performance. Governing body records are thorough and comprehensive and illustrate that they understand and analyse information, for example about pupils' phonics results at the end of Year 1. They understand the quality of teaching and as a result can manage the pay and performance of other staff so that only good teaching is rewarded. Governors check that any new governor appointments bring the skills and experience the school needs.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils' safety and well-being are given top priority. School leaders, including governors make sure that the arrangements for checking the suitability of staff are thorough. As a result, those who work with children are carefully vetted. The school works successfully with its key partners to ensure that all pupils are safe and cared for well. The site is secure and required checks on safety are carried out diligently. Leaders work closely with parents to ensure that pupils are safe and well supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching quality is good and is characterised by brisk, purposeful pace and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what can be achieved in the time available. Pupils understand that their full attention is required in every lesson.
- Teachers ask pupils searching questions to help them to learn better. Rather than always giving pupils answers, they guide them towards investigating and challenging their own and each other's thinking. For example, in a 'Readathon' story session in Year 4 a Charles Dickens story was discussed in considerable detail making pupils from

Year 1 to 6 reflect and talk thoughtfully on particular parts of the text. As a result, pupils consolidate and deepen their understanding.

- Teachers encourage pupils to self-assess so that they have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils explained to inspectors how these systems work and said that the teachers' feedback was helpful. While the school has improved the quality of marking and this has had success in helping pupils improve, there remains some variability in the implementation of the policy so some pupils do not know precisely how to improve their skills or work.
- There are good relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom and clear expectations of good behaviour. As a result, the inspectors saw very few pupils not behaving well. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed learning and that behaviour was well managed by the adults. Pupils understand the reward systems for good behaviour.
- Extra verbal guidance provided by both teachers and support assistants is effective at deepening knowledge and understanding and makes a valuable contribution to the learning of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those at risk of falling behind and the most able.
- Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge, and explain new ideas clearly. They insist on the correct subject-specific terms from the youngest age onwards. Pupils are frequently required to apply their reading and writing skills in many different subject areas. Pupils' improved, and improving, progress in English has been greatly assisted by these many opportunities.
- The school ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well, often with the support of teaching assistants who effectively rephrase questions and check on their progress. Teaching assistants are deployed so as to have the maximum impact on the progress of the class as a whole.
- Reading is effectively taught. Pupils make very good use of the school library. Staff regularly encourage pupils to read more challenging books. Phonics skills are well taught. Higher-attaining readers are challenged effectively because they are encouraged to attempt more complex fiction and non-fiction texts. Pupils who find reading difficult are helped effectively because the level of challenge is carefully increased.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not consistently challenge the pupils enough in their use of mathematics skills. This slows the development of pupils' skills because they do not solve mathematical problems in a wide range of everyday contexts. As a result, pupils do not use their knowledge of calculation strategies in a variety of problems and this limits the progress they make.
- Writing is generally taught well. Pupils have good opportunities to write for different audiences but they do not write in depth across different subjects. Tasks do not challenge pupils to write using the full repertoire of skills that they have mastered in different curriculum areas such as history.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know that an adult will listen and help them if they have a problem. They are taught about the different types of bullying and know that such behaviour is unacceptable and rare. They also feel that, if it happened it would be stopped quickly. This is supported by the school's records, which show that such incidents are infrequent.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were very happy and self-confident in this supportive and nurturing school. Pupils are keen to talk about their achievements. Pupils who need a boost with their confidence or help with an aspect of school life are given bespoke support through the nurturing provision.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and that adults look after them. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. The programmes the school uses provide constant reminders and ways to deal with the potential dangers associated with, for example, using the internet and mobile phones.
- Pupils are generally well mannered and courteous. They typically play well together in the playground although there are times when play becomes a little too rough.
- Pupils are keen and ready to take responsibility. Those who served as ambassadors for their class described to inspectors what they were learning, and were articulate and helpful. They take their jobs seriously and do their best. School council members are able to talk clearly about what they do and the impact of their roles on others. The 'sports crew' ensure that equipment is ready for pupils to use and carefully stored when not in use.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils respect others and get on well together. They conduct themselves well without being prompted most of the time in and around the school, for example by helping other children if they hurt themselves. They consider the needs of others. Older pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed visiting younger children and helping out.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently positive. One pupil, typical of many, said, 'I like learning because we get to do lots of different things.' Teachers set high expectations and establish a calm and purposeful climate for learning. Pupils are very willing to learn, and display an impressive level of concentration. They collaborate well and settle to work promptly.

- Pupils have a clear understanding about what they need to do to achieve both academically and personally. They want to do well and to help others to do well. Pupils regularly help each other to improve their work, and this has the impact of improving the progress of all. They care for each other and for the environment. They are proud of their school and they look after it well.
- Pupils usually listen attentively to the teacher and their books are very well presented. There are a few times when pupils do not sufficiently focus on their learning and this limits progress in some lessons.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. There are a small number of cases of low attendance but the school follows up absences thoroughly and persistent absence is reducing.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Previous published achievement information has showed that progress has been too slow. There has been a significant improvement in pupil progress and standards are rising quickly. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. This is because senior leaders check pupils' progress with accuracy and rigour and communicate findings to staff so that achievement information is fully understood. Figures are presented to governors clearly, enabling them to ask searching questions and hold leaders at all levels to account.
- Attainment of Year 6 pupils in 2016 was broadly average. School achievement information shows that the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment is increasing, especially in mathematics and in reading.
- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points across reading, writing and mathematics and in all year groups. Information from this year and last shows that pupils also make good progress in skills in other subjects too.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive extra assistance that is carefully planned. This has meant that this group of pupils are more confident and their basic literacy and numeracy skills are developing at the same rate as those of other pupils nationally.
- Lower-attaining pupils make good overall progress because teachers plan effectively to ensure that they address their needs. Their progress is similar to other groups of pupils because staff are doing well to support these pupils where there are gaps in their knowledge. This ensures that they make good gains in their learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because support and programmes to address specific weaknesses in knowledge and understanding are targeted well. As with all other pupils, the school checks their progress from their different starting points and can demonstrate success with each one.
- The most able pupils make good progress in line with others at the school because staff provide tailor-made learning experiences, which ensures fast progress. Their attainment is generally in line with or above that of most-able pupils across the country.

- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Staff quickly understand their needs and routinely assess the impact of the work of teaching and the programmes to support their key skills, such as reading.
- Most pupils read confidently and accurately. They have skills that help them work out unfamiliar words and have a good understanding of what they are reading. Pupils are capable readers who are interested in books. Effective phonics teaching and opportunities in classes to read, discuss and analyse a range of texts equip pupils with a good level of skill, including those who speak English as an additional language.
- Sometimes the basic writing and mathematical problem-solving skills of pupils are not planned for in enough depth across different subjects. As a result, the standards reached in writing are behind those in reading, and problem-solving skills are not as strong as in other areas of mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Teachers have a positive impact on the learning and progress of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, children make good progress from the time they start and the majority achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. Children are well prepared for transition to Year 1.
- Disadvantaged children, who are eligible for the early years pupil premium, do well. Their skills match those of other children at the school and they make good progress. The school works in effective partnership with external agencies to support children with a range of additional needs. Consequently, those identified as having additional needs make good progress in line with others.
- All adults working in the Nursery and Reception classes are fully involved in checking on children's learning and progress, and planning next steps. For example, in the outside area the teacher and the teaching assistant were actively involved in a 'taxi' and 'parking' activity that ensured children were quickly developing mathematical, speaking and social skills.
- Adults are kind, encouraging and calm and children grow in confidence and show interest in one another and the world around them.
- Teaching in the early years is good. This is because the vibrant learning environment and the well-planned activities on offer stimulate children's interest and help them to build their concentration. Staff know just when to intervene to help children to understand better what they are learning but sometimes do not question them to help them think and move their learning on.
- Assessment procedures are thorough and accurate and information about children's progress is communicated well to parents.
- Children learn about the world around them, absorbing British values through the curriculum as well as learning about a wide range of religious festivals and celebrations.

- Children behave very well and the school nurtures their personal development. For example, children learn to keep themselves safe when using and working on the equipment outside.
- The school keeps the children safe. Rigorous risk assessments and daily checks are undertaken when children move around the school site or go on visits and trips.
- The early years is well led and there are clear plans for improvement. Senior leaders make regular checks on children's progress and the quality of teaching. Effective partnerships with other agencies ensure that children who have additional needs get the help they need to succeed.

School details

Unique reference number	123179
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10019888

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Cheeseman
Headteacher	Neil Blackwell
Telephone number	01295 262507
Website	www.st-leonards.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	head.3262@st-leonards.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Reception class on a full-time basis and the Nursery class on a part-time basis.
- The school meets current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for

pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classrooms. Some of these observations were carried out alongside the headteacher. Inspectors also attended a school assembly, examined pupils' work in books and on display, and considered school test and assessment information.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at the beginning and end of the school day, at lunchtimes and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving about the school site.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders, subject leaders, governors and advisers from the local authority and the Diocese of Oxford.
- There were 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors studied these, took account of several letters from parents and talked to some parents at school. Inspectors considered 46 responses to Ofsted's school staff questionnaire.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included: information about pupils' progress, the school's own evaluations of its work, school improvement plans and information about the work of the governing body. Records relating to staff performance management, behaviour, attendance, safety and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Francis	Ofsted Inspector

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