

Leverstock Green Church of England Primary School

Green Lane, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 4SA

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have made sustained improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and other adults typically ensure that pupils are well supported and make good progress, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Parents value the good education that the school provides for their children. All parents who spoke with inspectors or completed Ofsted's Parent View survey reported that their child is taught well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and reflects the school's values. During lessons pupils support each other well, which aids their learning.
- Leaders work well with external agencies to help children and their families, particularly those who are in most need of support. These partnerships ensure that pupils are safe and secure.
- Teachers equip pupils well for the many opportunities to take leadership positions in the school. Many pupils work with staff to help improve the school. They speak confidently about their achievements and ambitions.
- Teachers in the early years provide activities that inspire children to love learning and achieve well. Children have fun with reading, writing and mathematics and make good progress.
- Governors provide effective challenge to leaders and hold them clearly accountable for pupil outcomes.
- Sometimes, pupils make less progress than they might because the tasks that teachers set them are insufficiently challenging.
- Leaders accurately monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment but have not always acted quickly enough when improvements have been needed. This has limited some pupils' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management so that:
 - leaders provide swift support and challenge to bring about improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment when necessary.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - challenge pupils to think more deeply by providing them with more demanding work
 - respond effectively during lessons when pupils are ready to extend their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders at all levels work with a common purpose and determination to improve the quality of education. The work of leaders has led to improvements in pupils' outcomes across the school in each of the last three years.
- Leaders manage teachers well. They hold them accountable for the quality of pupils' outcomes in regular meetings between leaders and teachers. Subsequently, teachers create effective support plans that help to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Leaders make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They seek support, when needed, from external partners. These partnerships have contributed towards the good quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics across the school.
- As a part of the long-term school improvement strategy, staff have been supported to work towards the national professional qualifications appropriate to their level of leadership. As a result, for example, new and highly effective approaches to teaching English have been introduced across the school.
- The leadership and management of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. The special educational needs coordinator works well with external agencies to identify and help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This has typically enabled them to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Leaders make skilful use of pupil premium funding. Leaders have successfully used the additional funding for learning mentors and to provide targeted support. Leaders have also offered opportunities, such as educational visits, to enrich the learning of disadvantaged pupils.
- The majority of pupils have benefited from the well-judged use of additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport. Pupils fully understand the importance of exercise for good health and enjoy taking part in PE and sport. Eighty-seven per cent of pupils participate in extra-curricular sport.
- With the aim of teaching pupils about 'life in all its fullness', leaders have created a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils benefit from the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum while making good progress in subjects such as science, geography, history and computing. The school has achieved a national award in recognition of its high quality of teaching, learning and outcomes in music.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Along with strong support from church visitors in assembly, pupils learn in lessons about the wider moral, social and cultural issues faced in Britain in 2018. For example, pupils gain an understanding about different faiths and how these are practised.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of British values that is embedded within the broad and balanced curriculum at the school. Pupils also have many opportunities to experience British values as members of the school community. For example, pupils experience democracy first hand by voting to elect

members of the school council, known as the 'Change Team'.

- Leaders have not always acted quickly enough to improve teaching, learning and assessment when their monitoring has indicated standards are not as high as they should be. As a result, some pupils have had to undertake catch up sessions to enable them to make the progress that they should.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through visits to the school, analysis of pupils' outcomes and reports from external consultants. Governors speak with confidence and accuracy about the areas that leaders need to improve.
- Minutes of governing body meetings demonstrate that governors hold leaders accountable for school improvement and pupils' progress and attainment. This has contributed towards the improved outcomes for pupils across the school.
- Governors check carefully the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to confirm that additional funding is used effectively.
- Governors carry out their statutory obligations regarding safeguarding. They monitor the pre-employment checks that leaders make on adults who will work with children, as well as other safeguarding procedures. This helps to ensure that pupils are safe at school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All adults working at the school have a shared understanding that it is everyone's responsibility to make sure that pupils are kept safe and feel safe. Adults are alert to any causes for concern about individuals and communicate these in a timely manner to the designated safeguarding lead.
- Staff have regular training which contributes towards their awareness of safeguarding issues and risks. This training has enabled them to deal effectively with difficult safeguarding concerns.
- Staff work well with external agencies to keep children safe in child protection cases. Staff maintain detailed records relating to vulnerable pupils and they carefully track the support that pupils receive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have ensured that staff have access to high-quality training, guidance and support. This has helped ensure that, overall, teaching, learning and assessment are effective.
- Teachers typically ask questions that help to move pupils' learning forward across the curriculum. They develop pupils' skills of listening and public speaking particularly well. Inspectors heard children speak confidently, both in lessons and in front of the whole

school during assembly.

- Adult assistants provide effective support for pupils who might otherwise fall behind in their learning. This support contributes to the good progress of pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and many disadvantaged pupils.
- Teachers often challenge pupils to use sophisticated vocabulary during lessons, and to consider carefully the words they choose when writing. This high expectation by teachers is reflected in the increasing maturity of pupils' writing as they progress through the school.
- Across the curriculum, teachers are alert to pupils' misunderstandings and mistakes. They help them to unravel or correct these, which enables pupils to take the next steps in their learning. This aspect of teaching is particularly effective in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Teachers and adult assistants have a consistent approach to phonics lessons. Nearly all pupils at all levels use phonics effectively to read difficult or unfamiliar words.
- Often, teachers skilfully broaden pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, in Year 1 pupils were learning about the effects of pollution on wildlife in the Pacific Ocean. At the same time, pupils learned about the process, and value, of recycling plastic. They wrote highly persuasive letters to the headteacher recommending more recycling at school.
- Teachers manage behaviour well most of the time and give pupils lots of opportunities to develop independence. Pupils usually work hard and focus on their learning but occasionally stray off task when work is too easy.
- Sometimes teachers do not challenge pupils enough and do not realise when pupils are ready to move on to harder work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They speak clearly about the qualities that make for good learning, including the school's 'learning powers': reflection, responsibility, resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity.
- Pupils consistently show willingness to take leadership positions in and out of lessons. Pupils help each other learn and enjoy opportunities to improve the school, including taking part in the planning of new outdoor provision.
- The school's rewards system emphasises personal development along with good behaviour. Pupils value this. They told inspectors that they are motivated to work hard when teachers recognise their effort with, for example, the 'You can, toucan' award.
- One pupil spoke for many when she said that: 'The school values diversity within equality.' The overwhelming majority of pupils who responded to Ofsted's survey said that the school encourages pupils to respect people from different backgrounds and to

treat everyone equally.

- Teachers offer guidance and support that helps pupils to manage challenging personal issues. Along with mentioning adults at school, many pupils confidently recited the Childline phone number when asked where they would seek help if they were very worried about an issue. Some parents made clear their appreciation of the school's support, indicating, in the words of one, that: 'The school has worked closely with us as a family during hard times.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and how to respond to it appropriately. The pupil survey shows that the majority of pupils feel confident that staff deal effectively with bullying when it occurs.
- Teachers work in partnership with external agencies and visiting experts to ensure that pupils are well informed about a variety of risks, and how to minimise these risks and stay safe. Pupils have a well-developed understanding about how to stay safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have successfully created an ethos at the school where good behaviour is the norm and poor behaviour is unacceptable. The overwhelming majority of pupils, parents and staff reported that the school manages pupils' behaviour well.
- Pupils consistently demonstrate the school's values and enjoy being kind to others. They told inspectors that one of the good things about school is the way 'people work together'.
- When disagreements arise on the playground and in lessons, pupils debate with each other confidently and politely. This typically ensures that they resolve disputes amicably.
- Leaders work closely with parents whose children do not attend school regularly enough to help bring about improvement. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. Attendance is now at the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress over time is good. Pupils use the many skills they learn in English and mathematics well in other subjects. School assessment information for 2018 shows that most pupils generally make strong progress.
- In 2017 and 2018, in key stage 1, most pupils achieved in line with age-related expectations and made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils who did not achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception went on to achieve age-related expectations in Year 2. This demonstrates that pupils who fall behind are supported well to catch up.
- Improvements in teaching, learning and assessment introduced over the last three years have contributed towards improved attainment in key stage 2 in 2018. In national tests, Year 6 pupils attained highly in reading, writing and mathematics. Younger pupils' learning in books and lessons show similarly good achievement in

reading, writing and mathematics.

- The strong teaching of phonics has typically led to good outcomes in the national screening check at the end of Year 1. Older pupils use their understanding of phonics to read words that are unfamiliar to them.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils are fluent readers who understand the many different types of texts and show sound comprehension across all subjects in the curriculum. Pupils choose and benefit from reading books that develop their reading skills.
- Pupils gain good writing skills from practising their writing in different subjects and, by the end of Year 6, have developed skills expected of pupils their age. Pupils use interesting vocabulary to clarify their meaning and to capture the interest of the reader.
- In mathematics, by the end of key stage 2, pupils demonstrate well developed skills of reasoning and application, along with a good understanding of mathematical concepts. Younger pupils confidently use a range of approaches to complex calculations and can successfully apply their skills to mathematics problems appropriate to their age.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities typically make good progress from their starting points. Teachers and additional adults create a 'can-do' ethos for these pupils and provide work matched to their needs in class and small support groups.
- Well-targeted support helps disadvantaged pupils to make good progress. Teachers and additional adults work closely with the families of these pupils to support good learning at home and school.
- Pupils make good progress in the foundation subjects, particularly in art, science, history and geography. In science, pupils correctly test predictions and use scientific knowledge well to draw conclusions from their findings. Pupils successfully apply their learning from different subjects, using scientific knowledge well when studying volcanoes in geography, for example.
- Sometimes the most able pupils make less progress than they should because they are not always given work to complete that is sufficiently challenging.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in the early years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception was above the national average in 2017. Children are consistently well prepared for Year 1.
- Leadership of the early years has improved outcomes for children considerably over the last three years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has nearly doubled since 2015.
- The early years leader has high expectations of staff and children. She works closely with staff to ensure that they have the skills needed to meet the leader's high expectations. During a period of staffing instability, the early years leader maintained good outcomes across the area.
- Teachers and practitioners carefully match the provision to the needs and interests of the children. As a result, all groups of children have fun while learning and make good

progress from their starting points. For example, inspectors observed boys playing while making birthday cards and developing their writing with small messages for each other.

- The early years classrooms and outdoor provision have good-quality displays that extend children's learning.
- Adults work hard to keep in regular contact with parents using a range of media. Staff contact parents in a variety of ways, depending on the needs of the parents. All parents have contributed 'magic moments' from home for their child, which form part of the learning journal.
- Children behave well and develop good social skills in the early years that prepare them well for Year 1. Children understand and live by the school values in ways appropriate to their ages. Children enjoy the positive ethos in the early years and play and learn well together.
- Safeguarding is effective. Adults constantly watch for potential risks to the children and put measures in place to keep children safe and happy.

School details

Unique reference number	117416
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10041797

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	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Rayner
Headteacher	Victoria Burgess
Telephone number	01442 406 520
Website	www.leverstockgreen.herts.sch.uk
Email address	head@leverstockgreen.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is led by the headteacher. The leadership team is held accountable by the local governing body.
- The school is slightly smaller than the national average for primary schools.
- The school's proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past six years is 10%. This is below the national average.
- The school's proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is 18%. This is below the national average.
- Thirteen per cent of the school's pupils have SEN and/or disabilities. This is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in every class. Inspectors looked at pupils' books across a wide range of subjects and all year groups. This included disadvantaged pupils, higher-attaining pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, a local authority consultant, subject leaders, phase leaders, teachers, support staff, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors read and considered a range of documents, including: school improvement documents; policies; information about pupils' progress; evaluations of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; information about pupils' behaviour and attendance; the single central record of recruitment checks of staff.
- Inspectors considered 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 170 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and 19 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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