

# Leesland Church of England Controlled Infant School

Whitworth Road, Gosport PO12 3NL

<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has not improved enough since the last inspection. The stronger aspects of leadership seen at that time have not borne fruit. Teaching has improved but is not yet consistently good.
- Reading has improved but attainment in writing has been particularly low. Pupils' writing has not improved strongly enough. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils when it comes to writing. Children's early writing skills are not developed well enough in Reception.
- The most able pupils make steady, but not good, progress in writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 did not achieve well enough in 2015. There are some clear signs that these pupils are beginning to catch up but there is more to do.
- Senior leaders and governors have an over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. They have seen improvements in leadership and teaching and assumed that pupils have been making good progress when some groups have not.
- Staff are fully supportive of the senior leaders' work and are proud to be working at the school. However, the school had to improve from a low point. Leaders have made changes for the better but these have not had time to make a clear difference to pupils' achievement.
- When leaders observe lessons or scrutinise pupils' books, they do not shine a spotlight on pupils' learning and progress to find out if they are good enough and what needs improving.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school and participate well in lessons. They stick to their tasks and try their best. Pupils are friendly, feel safe and cared for, and behave well.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make has been effective. Teaching of this aspect (phonics) is good. Reading is clearly improving as a result.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment in reading, mathematics and, particularly, writing to at least the national average and close the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally by:
  - making sure that teachers give children regular opportunities to develop their early writing skills and that writing is given high priority in all three Reception classes
  - making sure that all teachers have high expectations of children as writers and that those who have difficulty holding pencils and forming letters are supported to do this
  - ensuring that the most able pupils, on leaving Reception, are given the right work in Year 1 to enable them to work in greater depth
  - checking that any changes to the provision or extra support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability have a clear impact on these pupils' learning
  - making sure that all teaching assistants are well briefed and are alert to opportunities when they can have a clear impact on pupils' learning.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that leaders focus in depth on how successfully pupils are learning, when judging the quality of teaching, particularly the most able pupils and those from disadvantaged backgrounds
  - making sure that the school improvement plan focuses on a realistic number of the most essential priorities that staff need to work on to move the school to good, and to set clear and measurable goals for pupils' outcomes with crisp timelines
  - strengthening the capacity of governors to provide the right degree of challenge to assure themselves that pupils from different groups are achieving as well as they should, and that the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is closing any gaps quickly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has not had a successful journey of improvement since the last inspection. Some weaknesses in leadership and teaching have slowed down its progress. Work to improve key areas, in the year following the inspection, did not always come to fruition despite being listed as priorities in the school improvement plan. These included raising attainment, improving outcomes for the most able pupils and improving governors' ability to analyse the school's data and check pupils' standards. Pupils' outcomes in 2015 fell well short of the targets that were set for pupils' attainment, particularly in writing.
- Senior leaders and teachers who lead English and mathematics monitor the quality of teaching through a range of activities. This approach is intended to give leaders a rounded view of what teaching is typically like in each class. Some of these activities are done jointly with advisory staff from the local authority. Leaders judge teaching to be consistently good. This is over-optimistic. Reports focus predominantly on what the teachers do rather than how well pupils are learning. Importantly, there is very little analysis of how successful learning is for the disadvantaged and most-able pupils. These are two key groups that are not yet making good progress but which need to do so for the school to be judged good.
- The leadership team has introduced a number of initiatives and made some positive changes to the curriculum. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability has been reformed, which was necessary. The most able pupils in Year 2 are benefiting from extra sessions in mathematics. Many of the changes have been brought in during recent months. While there are some positive signs, the changes have not been in place long enough to show they are making a clear difference to pupils' learning and progress.
- The school's current plan for improvement lists a lot of actions and it is difficult to pinpoint where the priorities lie from the plan alone. Timescales are not clear and information on pupils' attainment is often undated. As a result, it is difficult for those monitoring the success of the plan, including governors, to check that the effort being put in to improve the school is proving successful.
- Senior leaders have raised aspirations for the pupils by, principally, raising teachers' expectations. This is now clearly a school where teachers want pupils to do their best and achieve well. Leaders have achieved a consistent approach: the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is a good example. Improving reading, which started soon after the last inspection, is an area where there has been more success. Pupils' attainment is rising and there are more pupils who can read well, for their age, than has been the case in the last two years.
- The current senior leaders have focused clearly on improving teaching during this academic year. Teachers know they are accountable for pupils' progress and regular reviews take place when each pupil's attainment is reviewed. Weaker aspects of teaching have been tackled through supporting or managing teachers' performance. There is a determination, on the part of the senior leaders and governors, that the right people will be appointed, even if this means re-advertising posts and having to wait longer than was hoped.
- Senior leaders have had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour was much better than it had been in previous years. Leaders have been proactive in mixing up classes, at the end of the year, to achieve a better blend of personalities. They have established a common set of 'rules', which are prominently displayed in classrooms and which pupils know and respect.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development well. Pupils are mindful of the school's values and the atmosphere that leaders, teacher and staff want to create in the school to help them learn successfully. Staff show pupils, through their own actions and demeanour, what it is to get along happily together in a school community. In this way, pupils are encouraged to play their part and develop the skills and attributes that they need to be tolerant and understanding of others and to protect them from being drawn into things, now or in the future, that may cause harm or upset to others.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has started to have a positive effect on these pupils' progress but there is still more to do before some wide gaps close.
- Leaders have made good use of the additional funding for physical education and sport. Pupils have access to a good range of opportunities, including sessions to develop their skills and coordination and the chance to participate in extra-curricular events or sports and skills festivals with other local schools. Pupils' interest and involvement in physical activity and sport has increased as a result of these initiatives and some sessions are at full capacity.

- Senior leaders have secured the backing of staff. The sense of everyone working as a team for the benefit of the pupils is tangible. Staff support the direction set by senior leaders, feel respected and trusted, and are proud to be a member of staff at the school.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body has not had a marked enough impact on improving the school since the last inspection. This year, governors have increased their capacity to provide appropriate challenge for the school's leaders. They have some knowledge of the school's data and what it shows but not in enough depth. However, the senior leaders', and the local authority's view, that the quality of teaching and pupils' progress had moved to good, had clouded the governors' view. They, understandably, felt confident that this was the case and had therefore not questioned the evidence to check for themselves.
  - Governors are aware of the money specified for the pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and know how this, and the extra government funding for sports, is spent. They do not, however, ask pertinent questions about the impact of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to check that it is making a marked difference. Governors have minimal knowledge of the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the school. They do not check that any gaps that exist between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are closing quickly.
  - The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have set up rigorous systems for ensuring that any pupils who are experiencing, or likely to face, risks to their safety and well-being are protected. Records are kept efficiently and securely. Leaders who hold responsibility for this aspect of the school's work have good links with a range of agencies. Governors and leaders make sure that any staff who are appointed to the school, or who may come into contact with pupils, go through the necessary checks. Staff are trained appropriately to equip them with the knowledge they need to be alert to a variety of risks, including extremism and radicalisation. Staff maintain and foster good links with parents and carers.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement**

- Teaching is improving and pupils' attainment is rising but this has not been the case for long enough to have made a marked difference to pupils' progress. Consequently, teaching is not yet good.
- Teaching is not yet helping pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who are most able to make good progress over time. When leaders visit lessons, or scrutinise pupils' books, they are not shining a spotlight on how well these two groups of pupils are learning and giving specific feedback to help teachers develop their practice.
- Pupils' books show some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations when it comes to writing. There are differences between classes. The most able pupils, for example, show their true potential in some pieces of work but this is not always sustained, over time, to enable them to move ahead of the expectations for their age.
- Teachers know which pupils need to catch up but it is only relatively recently that provision has been improved for pupils who have special educational needs or disability. The extra help these pupils receive has been wide-ranging but not always effective. Leaders have now improved the school's approach and teachers have a better insight into these pupils' needs. They are now receiving much more specific and targeted help but this has only been the case in recent months. While there are some early signs that pupils are moving ahead much more quickly, in reading commonly used words for example, it is too early to see the impact of the changes on pupils' progress.
- Teaching assistants do not all capture opportunities to promote pupils' learning. When they are briefed well, by the class teachers, and have a clear view of the main learning point of the activities, they contribute effectively and make a clear difference to pupils' success in the lesson. There are occasions, however, when teaching assistants are much less involved and sit and watch the teacher, rather than being on the lookout for opportunities to support learning.
- When teachers check pupils' work, they do not always pick up on pupils' errors. Pupils are making mistakes in mathematics, for example, that are not being picked up. Therefore, pupils are continuing with misconceptions. Leaders have identified this as a weakness but only recently, so it is too soon to see this aspect of teaching improving.

- Phonics teaching has improved considerably. The school has adopted a consistent approach to how phonics and early reading skills are taught. This was working well during the inspection, with pupils learning successfully, whether taught by a teacher or teaching assistant. The teaching of reading is more successful than writing.
- There is no doubt that there is some good teaching in the school and that the quality of teaching is on an improving trajectory. Some pupils make good headway over time but this not yet the norm, meaning that pupils' progress is not yet consistently good.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are very positive about school life. They enjoy coming to school and try their best to work hard. Pupils speak freely about the school's values, talking about 'grace', 'love' and 'respect' and what these mean to them in their daily lives.
- Pupils are appreciative of all that the staff do for them. They feel well looked after but also recognise that they are getting better at learning, mentioning their handwriting and mathematics work, for example, where they know they are improving.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Through the school's curriculum, they are taught various ways of keeping themselves safe and avoiding situations that may pose risks to their welfare, for example when using the internet.
- Staff provide sensitive support and care when pupils become troubled or upset. They administer first aid if pupils tumble in the playground and make sure that pupils are comforted and enabled to return to learning, or play, at the appropriate time.
- Pupils who may be facing difficult times at home are given particularly good care. Staff work closely with parents, who appreciate the good communication.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons. They organise themselves quickly, without fuss in most cases, so that time is not lost when they have to change activity.
- Pupils behave well in assembly. Any minor unsettled behaviour is dealt with sensitively and quickly to avoid other pupils becoming distracted.
- Pupils behave well in the playground and enjoy the opportunity to play and socialise. Relationships are good, as pupils take part in various games and explore the spaces available to them.
- Any incidents of bullying are very rare. Records show that any occurrences are dealt with quickly and effectively. The logs for behaviour show that incidents are minimal.
- Pupils' attendance has been below average but has improved this year and is moving much closer to average. Leaders make every effort to encourage good attendance when any pupil's attendance falls below acceptable levels. They persist with their encouragement for the small number of pupils who miss a lot of school.

## **Outcomes for pupils require improvement**

- Pupils' attainment is showing improvement this year and pupils are achieving more successfully than in the past. However, too little was done to raise standards in writing following the last inspection. This slow start has held the school back in its journey of improvement to get to good.
- While there was some improvement in 2015, pupils who moved to the junior school last year left with attainment that was significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Few pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics, far fewer than was the case nationally.
- In Year 1, last year, pupils did not do well enough in the national check for phonics. This was particularly the case for the pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds who were a long way behind other pupils, nationally, from non-disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Leaders and teachers have focused effectively on improving phonics and pupils are much better equipped this year. The teachers' assessments point to a marked increase in the results for pupils currently in Year 1, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Pupils' reading skills and understanding of books have improved. Pupils use their knowledge of sounds to work out unfamiliar words and enjoy reading books.
- The improvement in phonics is having a knock-on effect on writing, which is showing clear improvement from the very low standards last year. However, pupils who have special educational needs or disability have not had effective support to improve their writing skills.
- Many pupils do not hold pencils or pens in a way that gives them good control. They do not form letters correctly, starting at the right place. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils have not closed enough and progress is not consistently good for the most-able pupils. Progress in writing requires further improvement before it becomes good.
- In mathematics, the most able pupils in Year 1 have not always worked in enough depth this year. They have spent too much time going over ground that they already know, such as adding numbers that make 10 when they are capable of working with larger numbers. Their books show limited coverage of other aspects of mathematics beyond addition and subtraction. The most able pupils in Year 2 experience a broader curriculum. They have been taught in a separate group since Easter and the provision has much improved, with evidence of these pupils now working in greater depth. This new approach is in its early stages and has not had enough time to have had a clear impact on pupils' progress.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- Many children start school with skills and knowledge below what would be typical for their age. Weaknesses in communication, speech and language are common. Over the last two years, children have left Reception with below-average attainment as they have moved to Year 1.
- Most adults promote children's talk effectively when children are learning and exploring, particularly in the outside area. Not all teaching assistants capture opportunities to do this when the children are gathered together in larger groups or as a class.
- Leaders have not focused sharply enough on improving the achievement of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2015, the gap between these children and those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds, nationally, widened considerably from the previous year. The teachers' work to improve phonics has improved reading for all children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the gap has narrowed during the year. This is also the case in mathematics. However, it is in writing where the gap is still too wide.
- Writing does not have enough emphasis in all classrooms. This has been an area for improvement for the school as a whole, since the last inspection. Not enough has been done to encourage children's early writing skills from the beginning, when children are in their Reception year, to lay good foundations for Year 1 and beyond. In some classes, children are not experiencing writing regularly enough. In two out of three classrooms, there is very little writing support on display, or readily available, through words or labels for example, to support children's literacy. In the third classroom, it is a very different picture. Here, a clear message is given that writing is important and valued.
- The outdoor area is used well and, during the inspection, a myriad of activity was organised to encourage children's learning and exploration. Children move around with a good awareness of others. They use the resources that have been set out for them confidently and take turns, when queuing to go through the 'traffic barrier', for example.
- Children behave well, especially when they are choosing things for themselves, or are benefiting from the range of activities outside. Inside, some become restless when they are asked to sit on the carpet as a class for quite a long time. On these occasions, teachers tend to talk to some children on an individual basis, but this leaves the rest of the class uninvolved and their learning becomes less purposeful. Other adults occasionally have to step in to influence concentration or behaviour.
- Adults are attentive to children's welfare and safety, both indoors and outdoors. Children are well cared for and supported sensitively and promptly when they feel upset or unwell. Adults keep in close touch with parents and work successfully with other agencies, for example to support speech and language.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116335
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012253

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	268
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matt McKeown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Wilson (executive headteacher), Ros Wigley (associate headteacher)
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 583872
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leeslandschools-fed.co.uk">www.leeslandschools-fed.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:infantadminoffice@leesland-inf.hants.sch.uk">infantadminoffice@leesland-inf.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20–21 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is federated with Leesland Church of England Controlled Junior School. Both schools share an executive headteacher with one governing body. An associate headteacher leads the infant school.
- The executive headteacher took up her post in September 2015, following the retirement of the previous executive headteacher.
- There are three classes in each year group, including Reception.
- The school receives support through the Pioneer Teaching School Alliance.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) is slightly below average.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place at the same time as the inspection in the federated junior school.
- Inspectors observed learning in all classes and looked at evidence of children's work in Reception and, in Years 1 and 2, pupils' books in writing and mathematics. A few observations were conducted jointly with the executive headteacher.
- Inspectors talked to pupils informally and heard some pupils in Year 2 read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, governors and with English and mathematics leaders, both of whom teach in the junior school but lead across the federation.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including evidence of leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's plans for improvement since the last inspection and documentation relating to safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents, through talking to parents informally and through considering written comments and 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Margaret Dickinson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Boyd	Ofsted Inspector
Brian MacDonald	Ofsted Inspector

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