School report

Leominster Primary School

Hereford Road, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8JU

Inspection dates	9–10 January 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have maintained a clear focus on teaching and standards during the creation of the new school. As a result, they have established a good school which is well placed to improve further.
- Despite some reservations during the amalgamation, the very large majority of parents, staff and pupils are now enthusiastic about the education that the school provides.
- Leaders are thorough and accurate in their evaluation of the school's progress. They plan effectively to address each relative weakness that they identify.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers generally set work which is securely based on what pupils already know and understand. Teachers are knowledgeable and use the correct technical language in each subject.
- Teaching sometimes does not provide enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- Leaders have taken overt and effective actions to ensure that pupils are tolerant of people from other cultures and respect different traditions. Nevertheless, pupils need sustained encouragement to consider their roles within British society.
- Achievement is rising across the school. Current pupils are making consistently strong progress in English and mathematics, and are learning valuable skills in other subjects.
- Children in the early years get off to a very strong start. They make good progress, often from low starting points.
- Phonics is taught very well. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was high.
- Teaching in mathematics encourages pupils to think about their approaches and to explain their ideas to others.
- Safeguarding is highly effective. The staff care deeply and capably for pupils, including those who are the most vulnerable.
- Pupils enjoy school and behave consistently well, both in the classroom and at social times. The rate of pupils' attendance has increased and is now in line with the national average.
- Few pupils achieve the highest standards in the foundation subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills in different subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring that teachers consistently set work for the most able that enables them to make rapid progress
  - giving pupils the opportunity to apply their learning across the curriculum in new and demanding ways.
- Extend the impact of effective leadership by:
  - supporting teachers in developing approaches and tasks which challenge the most able to do their best and help them aspire to excellence
  - developing the skills of coordinators for foundation subjects so that they can provide a full range of support for the teaching and assessment of their subject, and monitor its effectiveness
  - continuing to expand pupils' appreciation of a range of different cultures and traditions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management — Good

- Leaders and governors have forged a new school which is securely based on the centrality of teaching and learning, and high expectations for staff and pupils alike. In doing so, they have overcome a number of practical difficulties and established a new aspirational culture. The new school has the overwhelming confidence of parents, staff and pupils.
- Leaders are accurate judges of the effectiveness of their actions, and during the inspection their views on the quality of teaching accorded with those of inspectors. They analyse pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour rigorously and devise plans which address every potential issue that emerges. Leaders amend any plans that are not having the impact they intended.
- Staff benefit from a wide range of training both within the school and externally. Teachers, including those who are at an early stage in their careers, told inspectors that training and leaders' observations of their lessons are consistently helping them to develop their skills. Inspection evidence confirmed this.
- Leaders promote fundamental British values effectively. Pupils told inspectors how elections to the school council worked and how pupils had used the council to press for a gazebo in the playground and new library books. The school has introduced pupils to a number of different cultures and traditions. Leaders have taken firm action when pupils' attitudes towards others have been disrespectful, and as a result pupils are clear about the importance of tolerance. Leaders and governors are aware, however, that more can be done to ensure that pupils understand their opportunities and responsibilities within wider British society.
- The school's curriculum is well balanced, and although leaders have prioritised English and mathematics, pupils enjoy good opportunities to develop skills in the full range of other subjects. Leaders acknowledge, however, that more detailed assessment and planning in foundation subjects will help to ensure that pupils, especially the most able, achieve their full potential. A high proportion of pupils participate in the school's clubs, which largely focus on sport and artistic activities.
- Leaders monitor the progress of key groups of pupils rigorously. This enables them to spend the pupil premium effectively, often in imaginative ways, to overcome disadvantaged pupils' barriers to learning. During the last academic year, they ran an additional small class of disadvantaged pupils in each year of key stage 2. When results showed that this had improved disadvantaged pupils' progress more in mathematics and writing than in reading, leaders put in place intensive individual support for disadvantaged readers.
- Similarly, leaders have recently acted to improve the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Staff now identify pupils' additional needs promptly, work effectively with parents and guide teachers in how best to meet pupils' needs. Leaders check the effectiveness of any additional support after a short time, so that it can be evaluated and amended if appropriate.

- Subject coordinators make a developing contribution to improving the quality of teaching. They research good practice and useful resources, and make them available to their colleagues. Coordinators make checks on the quality of teachers' planning and classroom practice, and identify areas for improvement. However, particularly in foundation subjects, teachers require further support to promote the highest standards, especially for the most able pupils.
- Leaders have been keen to work with other schools, for example to check on the accuracy of teachers' judgements on pupils' attainment and to develop the teaching of English. Plans are in place to establish further links with other schools. These have the potential to enable leaders to benefit from strong educational practice and to deepen pupils' understanding of the different cultures which make up modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Governors have maintained a steady focus on standards, supported senior leaders and overseen the establishment of an effective new school. They continue to monitor its progress in detail. The governing body receives detailed reports from senior leaders on pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour. Records of their meetings show that governors challenge school leaders to explain how their actions will achieve the best possible outcomes for the school's current pupils.
- The governing body makes good use of governors' particular skills, for example in finance and premises management. The school works within its budget, and governors check that additional funding to promote the achievement of particular groups of pupils is spent effectively. Governors involve an external adviser in the management of the headteacher's performance so that their decisions on his role are fairly judged.
- Governors check that leaders fulfil their obligations to keep pupils safe. They understand the local community and the risks it presents. Governors are fully aware of the part they can play in widening pupils' horizons and so preparing them effectively for life in modern Britain.
- Governors visit the school frequently and observe its work at first hand. They ensure that their training is up to date, but there is a little reluctance on the part of some to involve themselves more deeply in the work of the governing body.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding, because all staff are both vigilant and fully committed to the protection of all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Leaders work very well with parents and with other agencies which help to keep children safe. Records are suitably detailed, well organised and kept securely. Leaders fully understand the links between attendance and safeguarding.
- The school's organisational arrangements meet all statutory requirements. All relevant policies are up to date. Leaders have made sure that all staff are familiar with child

protection guidance and have been trained to an appropriate level. They make the appropriate checks when appointing new staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment — Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and improving. Teachers plan tasks for pupils which build on what they already know and understand. Work is therefore generally well matched to pupils' abilities. In lessons, teachers check on pupils' understanding, so that they are able to adjust the pace of pupils' learning if this is necessary.
- The relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils follow instructions readily and move around the classroom without fuss. Teachers adopt the school's behaviour policy unobtrusively on the rare occasions when pupils' inattention demands a response. Teachers know their pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses well.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about the range of subjects that they teach. They use the terminology of each subject accurately and ensure that pupils use it too. Teaching in foundation subjects develops pupils' understanding and skills as well as their knowledge. For example, pupils learn about how to conduct an investigation in science, and how to draw conclusions.
- Teaching in mathematics ensures that pupils learn how to perform calculations reliably. Any gaps in older pupils' understanding are identified so that the topic can be revisited. Inspectors witnessed how pupils are encouraged to think about their approach to their work and explain their reasoning both orally and in writing. In the classroom, inspectors saw teachers give pupils an important opportunity to reflect on their ideas and revise their answers if they wished. Some pupils made good use of practical equipment.
- Staff teach phonics very effectively. Regular assessment helps to ensure that teaching is closely matched to pupils' existing skills. Staff skilfully combine the teaching of speaking, reading and writing. Lively and well-paced activities ensure that pupils are fully engaged with their phonics learning.
- Teachers build effectively on pupils' phonic knowledge by identifying clearly the further reading skills they require. Inspectors observed pupils being encouraged to skim read passages, infer character from description and analyse new vocabulary.
- Staff provide effective additional teaching in English and mathematics for pupils at risk of falling behind. Teaching is based on a close analysis of those skills and ideas with which pupils have struggled. When the additional teaching takes place during lesson time, pupils miss out on some learning in foundation subjects.
- Teaching assistants typically make a good contribution to learning. They are well trained and knowledgeable. Inspectors heard them question pupils effectively to probe pupils' understanding and then explain ideas in simpler terms.
- Teaching in foundation subjects provides pupils with some opportunity to apply their literacy, numeracy and information technology skills. However, across the curriculum as a whole, pupils would benefit from the challenge of applying these and other skills in a wider range of contexts.

- Teachers are aware of the need to provide the most able pupils with tasks which are sufficiently challenging, but do not do so consistently. On occasion, teachers do not set work which represents the highest expectations for what the most able pupils might achieve. Sometimes, able pupils are asked to complete too much routine work before they start on activities which truly stretch them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare — Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel entirely safe in school and told inspectors that bullying hardly ever takes place. They have confidence that there is always an adult to speak to if a problem arises. The staff know their pupils very well, establishing mentors for some so that they can make sure that they identify and overcome any barriers to attendance or learning. This knowledge and the vigilance of staff make the school singularly effective in securing the welfare of pupils, including those most at risk.
- Lessons in personal, social and health education, assemblies and visiting speakers ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a number of different respects. They learn how to protect themselves online and about road safety and the dangers of substance abuse. The school makes every effort to ensure that pupils can swim.
- Leaders have made sure that pupils learn to understand cultures and traditions other than their own. For example, the school received visitors from Tanzania and took advice from the local authority about developing pupils' attitudes towards the Traveller community. In lessons, pupils listen respectfully to each other's views.
- Pupils have notable opportunities to demonstrate responsibility as monitors and as representatives on the school council. Under supervision, Year 6 pupils run a club for younger children. Pupils regularly raise money for charity, and wrote to the headteacher to ask to support the victims of the Manchester Arena bombing.
- Pupils are proud of their school, and older pupils appreciate that they are well prepared for secondary school. Some pupils nevertheless lack a little confidence and self-assurance.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Records held by the school show that it continues to improve.
- Pupils behave consistently well in lessons. From the early years on, pupils follow clear classroom routines. They value their learning, present their work neatly and told inspectors how they appreciate the feedback that staff provide for them. Pupils work hard, persevere and take the initiative to use dictionaries and other learning resources.

- Pupils' conduct at social times is orderly and responsible. During break and lunchtimes, they play happily together. Inspectors saw no instances of aggression, and pupils confirmed that this was the norm.
- Leaders keep detailed records of behavioural incidents, and these show that serious incidents are increasingly rare. They have reacted firmly and appropriately to establish the school's current orderly environment, and use fixed-term exclusion on a very few occasions. Pupils who join the school with challenging behaviour respond well to tailored plans which address their particular needs.
- Leaders track pupils' attendance in detail. For example, they have identified weeks in the year where attendance is likely to slip, so that they can alert parents in advance. Staff have worked imaginatively and relentlessly to reduce pupils' absence, so that it is now at the national average. Punctuality has also improved this academic year.

Outcomes for pupils — Good

- Information supplied by the school and evidence from pupils' workbooks show that across all year groups pupils are making strong progress in English and mathematics. They are generally progressing well in a number of other subjects, including science and history, because teachers ensure that they gain the particular skills and understanding associated with each subject.
- Provisional results for 2017 show that pupils left Year 6 having made progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics which was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in these three aspects of the curriculum was also average. Last year's results represented a considerable improvement on the same outcomes in 2016, especially in mathematics.
- Attainment in the early years and Year 1 has improved steadily since the school opened. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was high. At key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the respective national averages in 2016 and 2017.
- Although some differences in attainment remain in the younger years, disadvantaged pupils are making increasingly strong progress across the school. Provisional results for 2017 show that disadvantaged pupils leaving Year 6 had made similar progress to their peers. This constituted a marked improvement on the progress in writing and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils in 2016. The reading ages of current disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 have risen rapidly this academic year in response to intensive support.
- Until recently, the achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has lagged behind that of their peers. This academic year, pupils have responded well to the improved identification of needs and more effective teaching, both in the main classroom and in smaller groups. Achievement has therefore begun to improve, and inspectors saw pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities making good progress in some of the learning that they observed.

- Leaders have established a strong reading culture in the school. Pupils are confident in using their phonic strategies to tackle unfamiliar texts, and older pupils who read to the inspector showed both a love of reading and an advanced understanding of how texts work. Pupils have access to a good range of books and are strongly encouraged to read at home.
- Information supplied by the school and confirmed by inspection evidence shows that in foundation subjects, very few pupils achieve the highest standards. This shortfall reflects the fact that teachers have typically prioritised the acquisition of core knowledge and skills, sometimes at the expense of challenging the most able and ambitious pupils to achieve their best.

Early years provision — Good

- The large majority of children enter the school in the Nursery Year or the Reception Year with skills and abilities below those that are typical for their age. Leaders rapidly identify those pupils who have additional needs and organise appropriate support. Children make strong progress, and many catch up quickly, so that overall in 2017 results show that the proportion of children who had attained a good level of development was above the national average.
- Children's attainment in the early years has increased steadily since the school opened. High standards of behaviour and attainment, especially in English and mathematics, mean that children are well prepared for key stage 1. However, the achievement of boys and of disadvantaged children remains a little below that of their peers.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Adults skilfully question children to probe their understanding and encourage language development. Learning is well judged to build upon what children can already do and provide opportunities for children to progress in all areas of learning. Adults use time in the classroom effectively.
- During the inspection, children were often excited and engrossed by the different challenges, such as to build something with wheels. Just occasionally, adults do not provide sufficient stretch for those children who are relatively knowledgeable and confident.
- Leaders manage the provision effectively. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the setting. They give careful consideration to how they can improve the provision. For example, they have introduced more talk-based activities to promote early literacy and have addressed children's somewhat weaker physical development. Staff are well trained, including in the teaching of phonics. Leaders ensure that teachers' judgements about children's attainment are checked against those made by other schools.
- Staff succeed in creating a warm and nurturing environment from the outset. As a result, children settle easily and grow in confidence. They behave well because staff establish clear routines. They quickly learn to share and to treat adults and each other with respect. Inspectors saw staff managing the rare instances of inattention effectively but unobtrusively.
- Leaders ensure that the school works most effectively with parents. Parents regularly attend the setting to view slideshows which display children's work in the different areas of learning. Many also attend workshops which explain how parents can best

support their children's learning at home. Staff work hard with parents who do not initially appreciate the importance of regular attendance.

- The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is safe, attractive and well resourced. A high proportion of the staff are trained in paediatric first aid, and all welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	140617
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10032542

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	603
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Stiles
Headteacher	Tim Mamak
Telephone number	01568 616919
Website	www.leominsterprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@lps.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Leominster Primary School is a much larger than average primary school. It opened in September 2014 as the amalgamation of the predecessor infant and junior schools. The school moved to newly built accommodation in November 2014.
- Pupils in the Reception Year attend full time. The school runs morning and afternoon Nursery classes, and the large majority of children attend only one of these sessions. The school runs a breakfast club.
- The headteacher was appointed when the school opened. One of the deputy headteachers took up her current post in September 2015. There has been considerable staff turnover.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.

- A large majority of pupils are White British. About one in six pupils are from other White backgrounds.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 25 lessons and six learning walks. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors watched the teaching of some smaller groups. They also observed breakfast club and pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders and staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Three groups of pupils, two chosen at random, met with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke to many other pupils informally. One inspector listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors looked at a few workbooks in lessons. They also scrutinised a large number of books from both key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils in greater depth, working alongside senior leaders. Inspectors considered a range of information about pupils' recent and current academic performance.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included development plans and evaluations of the school's performance; minutes of meetings held by the governing body; policies; and reports of visits to the school made by representatives of the local authority. Inspectors scrutinised in detail records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspection team also took account of the 78 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and comments made using the free-text facility. They spoke with several parents over the course of the inspection. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to the staff survey and 55 responses to the questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector
Allyson Taylor	Ofsted Inspector

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