

Little Reddings Primary School

Harcourt Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 3PR

Inspection dates

9–10 November 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

- The headteacher provides strong, committed leadership that is focused on providing a high standard of education for all pupils. As a result, the school is rapidly improving.
- Teaching is now typically good across the school. Teachers plan activities that interest and engage pupils in their learning.
- The school works effectively to support all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Phonics teaching is good. Attainment at the end of key stage 2 continues to improve.
- The work in pupils' books shows that they are making good progress over time in a range of subjects.
- Pupils are well behaved around the school and in lessons. Pupils enjoy school and their attitudes to learning are positive.
- The school provides a safe learning environment. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.
- Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum. They study a range of interesting topics that contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides a comprehensive range of after-school and lunchtime activities. Pupils and parents are highly appreciative of this provision.
- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors now support and challenge school leaders to produce good outcomes.
- Leaders have taken effective action to reduce the number of pupils persistently absent from school. However, the attendance of some pupils is not yet as high as it should be.
- Early years provision is good. Children are well cared for and are making good progress. Teaching is generally good but sometimes, when children are working independently, the teachers do not make the activities challenging enough.
- Most subject topics provide pupils with the opportunity to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills. There is an inconsistency in how well these activities are planned in some year groups.
- Communication with parents has improved. However, a small minority of parents do not fully understand the recent changes to the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching in the early years by making individual learning activities more challenging.
- Further raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by planning activities in other subjects that allow pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Redouble the efforts to engage with those families who are not yet fully supportive of the school so that they understand the school's long-term vision and the reasons for the changes made.
- Continue to work with families to improve the attendance of the small minority of pupils who do not come to school regularly enough.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's passion, determination and resilience to improve the school during an unsettled period have resulted in a rapidly improving school. The challenges of recruiting high-quality staff had an adverse impact on pupils' progress and attainment last year. However, the headteacher's determination and persistence to employ high-quality teachers have resulted in a fully staffed school where teaching is now typically good. Inspectors saw an upward trajectory of improved progress for pupils currently in the school.
- The headteacher is well supported by a team of assistant headteachers and the governing body. Together they have created a learning environment and culture that promote good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning and celebrate success. Staff share these high expectations and are proud to work in the school. Staff morale is high.
- The legacy of underachievement is being strategically addressed. There is a rigorous process in place to identify the areas that individual pupils need to practise further in order to reach the expected standard for their age. These are shared with teachers, who plan work that addresses these weaknesses. As a result, pupils are quickly catching up and making good progress. Governors and trustees regularly discuss the findings and monitor the progress of different groups of pupils and ask challenging questions of senior leaders.
- At the time of this inspection several middle leaders were new to their posts. However, they have quickly and accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in their subject areas. They are regularly monitoring the standards within their areas and are working with staff to improve the quality of teaching, assessment and outcomes for pupils. Middle leaders demonstrate the ability to secure future improvements.
- The quality of teaching has improved because the headteacher has introduced regular monitoring of the quality of teaching throughout the year. The school uses a range of information to judge the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. Teachers are supported to improve their teaching through training and coaching.
- Appropriate systems are in place across the academy trust to manage the performance of all staff. Leaders and governors reward strong performance and tackle any underperformance. Performance management has been used effectively to support improvements in teaching.
- Staff training is linked closely to both performance management and the monitoring of teaching. Training is planned based on the needs of individual staff and whole-school developments. Staff value the training they receive.
- Senior leaders ensure that additional funds are used appropriately. For example, the pupil premium funding is used to ensure that the academic, social and emotional needs of disadvantaged pupils are well catered for. Disadvantaged pupils in the school make good progress because they are supported well in lessons, given good individual support where necessary, and have the opportunity to take part in clubs and trips.

- The primary school sports and physical education funding is used well. The funding has been used to increase the range of sports on offer to pupils; for example, badminton and tri-golf. After-school and lunchtime clubs have increased pupils' participation in sports, making a valuable contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles. The school has links with Arsenal football club and Saracens rugby football club. Both clubs offer pupils the opportunity to receive high-quality sports training.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils learn to connect their knowledge across subject areas, and are enthusiastic about the topics they learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for through these topics. Trips and visits enrich classroom learning. For example, Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about their recent trip to the RAF Museum in Hendon, where they experienced at first hand what life was like for a pupil in 1940.
- The school provides an extensive range of before- and after-school activities as well as lunchtime clubs. These clubs are linked to the local South Hertfordshire Children's University, are very well attended, and pupils value the variety of activities. Parents also commented positively about these activities.
- The school has been well supported by the academy trust and has benefited from shared training and from staff working across both schools. The local authority has also supported the school well through training and validating the judgements of senior leaders.
- Communication with parents has improved since the last inspection. Pupils receive electronic newsletters and texts and have access to an informative website. Senior staff are in the playground daily to speak to parents. Parents who spoke to inspectors were largely positive about the school and results of questionnaires, including Parent View, show that staff are mostly positive about the school. This is summed up by the following comment: 'Despite a difficult period of adjustment the head and the staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that the pupils do not suffer and continue to learn in a calm environment.' However, there are still a small proportion of parents who are not yet fully 'on board' with school leaders.

Governance of the school

- Governors carry out their role effectively. Following a review of governance, the governing body has introduced clear policies and procedures along with structures to challenge and support the work of school leaders. The governors have a wealth of relevant skills. They carry out their duties diligently and are passionate about the school.
- Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Those linked to specific areas such as special educational needs and safeguarding liaise well with staff in order to make sure that the school is meeting the current guidelines.
- Governors are supportive of leaders but also challenge them systematically and hold them firmly to account. This is particularly the case for the use and impact of pupil premium funding, attendance levels and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors ensure that the pay policy is rigorously adhered to and they check all recommendations for pay rises.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school ensures that all the relevant safeguarding checks are carried out on all members of staff prior to appointment. The identity of visitors is checked and those without the appropriate checks are not allowed to walk around the school unattended.
- Staff all receive regular safeguarding training and are up to date with the latest guidance relating to issues such as radicalisation, extremism and child sexual exploitation. All staff know how to identify possible indicators of safeguarding concerns and know what they should do in such circumstances.
- Procedures to identify and respond to any concerns are thorough. Safeguarding policies are up to date and comply with the latest guidance. The school website contains information for parents on e-safety. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan activities that are interesting and largely meet the needs of individual groups of pupils over time. As a result, the vast majority of pupils are interested in their learning, apply themselves to their work and make good progress.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are expected to behave well, present their work neatly and correct any mistakes in their work. Inspectors looked at a large number of pupils' books and saw evidence that almost all pupils regularly correct their work.
- Teachers use praise well to encourage pupils and as a result pupils are confident learners who are proud of their work. Pupils understand that they learn from making mistakes.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding of their work and to deepen their learning. Inspectors saw some good examples of teachers using questioning to move pupils on to the next learning activity and providing extra help to those who needed extra help.
- Teachers mark work regularly and consistently follow the school's marking policy. Pupils told inspectors that the feedback that teachers give them helps them to improve their work. Inspectors saw examples of pupils making progress as a result of the quality of oral and written feedback they received.
- Teaching assistants work well with teachers. They support pupils well and as a result pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to make good progress.
- Reading is taught well. In both Reception and key stage 1 teachers have good subject knowledge and match the learning activities well to the pupils' abilities. Older pupils speak positively about guided reading sessions and inspectors saw many good examples of work produced in these lessons.
- Writing is well taught. Through topic work pupils are able to develop their punctuation,

grammar and spelling skills as well as to practise different styles of writing. Good evidence was seen when pupils were writing a description of life on a battlefield as they used a range of metaphors and similes to improve the atmosphere of their writing.

- Teachers have good mathematical subject knowledge and pupils have the opportunity to develop their reasoning skills through a range of problem-solving activities.
- Homework is set weekly and is relevant. Each week pupils are given a mathematics activity and an English activity along with a piece of topic work. Pupils who spoke with inspectors were very enthusiastic about these homework topics. Pupils enjoy this homework because it allows them to investigate and research topics. Pupils told inspectors they like being able to, 'present our work however we like. We can be creative.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and describe the school as a happy place where pupils help one another, teachers are kind and 'relationships are good between teachers and pupils'.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in the school because their teachers look after them and nobody can get into the school building without authorisation. Staff all agree that pupils are safe in the school, as do most parents.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and that they can talk to an adult if they have concerns. Staff are confident that any bullying is dealt with quickly and appropriately, as do most parents. Parents commented that 'bullying is not tolerated' and that, if it should occur, it is dealt with.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using modern technology and learn about 'being smart' when using the internet. Physical education and sports lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' health and fitness. Pupils also learn about healthy eating.
- The school teaches pupils to respect one another's race, religion and culture. Pupils told inspectors that racism rarely occurs because part of the school's three rules is to 'care for everyone and everything'. School records confirm that racism is very rare.
- The school celebrates the different traditions and cultural events of the school community; for example Traveller week, armed forces day and harvest festival.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour around the school and at break and lunchtimes is good. Pupils walk quietly and calmly in corridors between classes and when going to the hall for assemblies or physical education lessons.

- Lunchtime is a pleasant, social occasion. Pupils line up sensibly for their meal and demonstrate good table manners when eating. Outside, pupils play together cooperatively and they value the good resources available.
- Behaviour in lessons is good because pupils enjoy and are fully engaged in their learning. In a small minority of lessons, pupils lose focus if the work is not as challenging as it could be.
- The school's behaviour policy is understood by all pupils and is consistently used by all staff. This has resulted in the number of incidences of poor behaviour reducing since the last inspection. Pupils respond quickly to requests from staff. Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is good and their learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils value the rewards system. They enjoy collecting stickers in order to receive bronze, silver and gold certificates. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the weekly rewards assembly. They told inspectors how much they liked getting the star of the week award because they get to take the teddy bear home for the weekend and write about their adventures together.
- Punctuality has improved as a result of the work done by the school with families on the importance of arriving to school on time.
- In 2015, attendance was below average due to the persistent absence of a small number of pupils. As a result of robust action taken by the school, the percentage of pupils persistently absent has significantly reduced but some pupils still do not attend frequently enough.
- The school ensures that pupils who are from Traveller families have a place in the school when they return to the area. This ensures that they quickly return to learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2015 the end of key stage 2 results show that pupils were making progress at least in line with the national average, and attainment was also broadly average in English and mathematics. At the end of key stage 1 pupils' attainment was also broadly average.
- In 2016 the proportion of pupils making good progress from their individual starting point in the new, more challenging tests, along with the proportion meeting age-related expectations, was in line with the national average in reading and below in mathematics and writing. Key stage 1 results in reading, writing and mathematics were also below average. The results in both key stages were affected by several factors, including pupils with a history of poor attendance, the number of pupils who joined the school mid-way through Year 6, and inconsistencies in teaching due to staff vacancies. However, when the results are analysed, the progress of pupils who had attended the school throughout Years 5 and 6 was good in reading and broadly average in mathematics. It was below average in writing.
- The recent improvements in teaching are rapidly overcoming a legacy of underachievement. The evidence from current pupils' books and in lessons indicates that a large majority of pupils currently in the school are making good progress from

their individual starting points. The school has high expectations and the vast majority of pupils are taught the curriculum appropriate to their age. Together, these are contributing to good progress.

- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress as a result of the quality of support they receive. School progress information indicates that almost all disadvantaged pupils are making at least good progress. Inspectors saw some excellent examples of mathematics and English work produced by disadvantaged pupils. The most able disadvantaged pupils are also making good progress, benefiting from additional support in Year 6 to accelerate their progress and increase their opportunities to attain good development at the end of key stage 2.
- Due to well-planned support, regular monitoring and teaching that is linked closely to their individual needs, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress. Leadership of this area is good and as a result pupils' progress is improving.
- The school has a larger-than-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school caters well for the differing needs of these pupils. Pupils currently in the school are making good progress across a range of subjects.
- Most children enter Nursery and Reception with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. From this low starting point they make good progress and are ready for key stage 1 when they finish early years.
- Pupils' skills in phonics have improved considerably. The change in teaching methods has led to rapid improvement, and in 2016 the proportion of pupils meeting the threshold in the phonics screening check met the national average. By the end of Year 2, all pupils met the national threshold.
- Pupils read well. Less-able readers who read to inspectors used their letter sounds well to read difficult words. They were able to suggest what might happen next in the story, illustrating a good understanding of the text. The most able readers read confidently and fluently and were able to summarise their reading and discuss the plot and characters. The pupils spoke with enthusiasm about book choices and their love of reading.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and writing is improving. Inspectors saw evidence of extended writing with accurate punctuation and grammar. Pupils in Year 1 had to write a description of a flower. The most able pupils were using sophisticated vocabulary such as 'fragrance' and 'texture'. In mathematics, pupils show a high level of perseverance and the ability to solve problems using more than one method. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary correctly.
- The most able pupils are being challenged throughout the school, as they are expected to complete the higher-level learning activities. In Year 6, the most able pupils know that they are being supported to deepen their knowledge and skills; for example, small groups of pupils are attending writing workshops delivered by a teacher from Bushey Meads School, a local secondary school.
- Pupils are making good progress in a range of other subjects. Progress in science is strong and in 2016 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was above average. In topic work, pupils have the

opportunity to practise their English and mathematics. Inspectors saw some good examples of this in books. However, this is not consistent across all year groups, so some pupils miss out on the opportunity to further improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is well led. The leader regularly monitors the quality of teaching, learning and children's progress. As a result, she has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and what she needs to do to further improve provision.
- Children quickly settle into both Nursery and Reception. Children who join Reception come from a number of nursery settings as well as the school's nursery. Parents are involved in the transition arrangements.
- Relationships with parents are good. Staff meet parents when they bring their children to school or collect them at the end of the day. At the start of the school day parents have the opportunity to spend time with their child looking at their work, reading with them or helping them with learning activities. Parents appreciate having this time with their children.
- Children are provided with interesting activities so they quickly become involved in their learning. Children are good at cooperating with one another on tasks such as building structures and writing lists.
- Children enjoy sharing their learning and are proud of their achievements. Staff encourage the children to be confident about their learning. For example, children in Reception Year were keen to stand at the front of the class to share their party shopping list with their classmates.
- Interactions between staff and children are positive. Staff use questioning well to extend children's learning and vocabulary. Teaching overall is good. It is very strong in the Nursery and rapidly improving in the Reception classes.
- Children are making good progress in all areas of learning. They benefit from a well-equipped outside area that gives them the opportunity to develop physical skills. However, to further accelerate progress, more staff need to make sure that when children are choosing their learning activities, those activities are sufficiently challenging. Currently, not all children are challenged enough, and as a result they sometimes lose interest in their learning.
- Assessment is detailed and rigorous and used well to identify the next steps in the child's learning.
- Children learn in a safe and stimulating learning environment. Safeguarding arrangements within the early years setting are effective. All the staff have received appropriate training.
- Inspectors received a number of positive comments from parents about the quality of the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	137861
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10019621

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	385
Appropriate authority	Bushey St James Trust
Chair	Sam Russell
Headteacher	Carly Simmonds
Telephone number	020 8950 5388
Website	www.littlereddings.org.uk
Email address	head@littlereddings.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school has been part of the Bushey St James Trust since 2012.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium grant is above average.
- Over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. This is above average for primary schools. The largest group is made up of pupils from other White backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club and after-school club.

- The early years is made up of Nursery and Reception classes. Children attend part time in the Nursery class and full time in the two Reception classes. Children join Reception from a number of local pre-school providers.
- In 2015 the school met the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part-way through the year is much higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 lessons and made three shorter visits to classes to observe the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Senior leaders joined the inspectors for three of the observations. The inspectors also looked at the work in pupils' books in lessons and conducted a work scrutiny to look at pupils' progress. Inspectors visited two assemblies.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- The inspectors observed behaviour in classrooms and around the school at break and lunchtime. They spoke formally to three groups of pupils and held informal conversations with pupils in the playground and dining hall.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, special educational needs coordinator and six members of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke to two members of the trust. A telephone conversation was held with the school's previous Hertfordshire improvement partner and the current school improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school policies, safeguarding documents, and information on pupils' progress and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start and end of the day and took note of their views. They also considered the 62 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 31 free-text responses. Results from the school's own parent survey and 14 emails sent to the school were also considered by the inspectors.
- The inspectors considered the response from the 23 members of staff who completed the inspection survey and the 70 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Dominic Carver	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Jude	Ofsted Inspector

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