

Layton Primary School

Meyler Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 7DX

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Layton lives up to its school motto, 'Growing great minds together' in everything it does.
- The exceptional leadership of the headteacher and the staff team has created a climate of high expectations, a love of learning and an insistence on the very best for every pupil.
- Governors are committed and knowledgeable. They support and challenge the headteacher effectively and make a valuable contribution to the ongoing development of the school.
- Outcomes for all pupils, at all levels, are exceptional. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards that are well above average by the time they leave key stage 2.
- At the core of its success is the resolute view that the highest quality of teaching and learning 'must run through the school like a piece of Blackpool rock'.
- The innovative approach to the professional development of staff has enabled them to grow quickly into highly-skilled practitioners who share a passion for learning.
- The precise tracking of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics means that leaders and teachers have a detailed understanding of how well pupils are doing. This overview and understanding is less well developed for other subjects.
- The state-of-the-art and wide-ranging use of information and communication technology has a significant impact on pupils' successful learning and enjoyment.
- Teachers' ability to ask the right questions to support pupils to develop their thinking, and move them on in their learning, results in outstanding teaching and learning over time.
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves extremely well around school. Their attitudes to learning in lessons are very positive and many play an important part in supporting their own and others' learning.
- Leaders are diligent in carrying out their duties for safeguarding. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe in school. Their welfare needs are well met.
- The provision for early years is outstanding. High-quality leadership and teaching create a stimulating learning environment and ensure that children have the best possible start to school life.
- Some parents feel communication about their child's learning is not as strong as it could be.
- Although leaders prepare pupils to move to secondary school well, still more could be done.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the accurate tracking of progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, so that leaders and governors have an even better overview and understanding of pupils' achievement across the curriculum.
- Explore ways to communicate even more effectively with parents about their children's learning.
- Explore further ways to support pupils moving on to secondary school so that the transition is smooth and successful for all.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and his unwavering determination to provide the very best for all pupils have resulted in Layton Primary being outstanding in all areas. Leaders' passion, commitment and thorough knowledge of what makes excellent teaching and learning have enthused staff to provide exceptional opportunities for pupils to be the best they can be.
- The school's five values, 'relationships', 'risk taking', 'resilience', 'resourcefulness' and 'reflection', are embodied in everything that the school does. Leaders' promotion of equality and diversity has fostered pupils who are caring, considerate, respectful and tolerant of each other and the wider community.
- Senior leaders know their school very well. The strengths of the school and areas for improvement are identified in the self-evaluation and school development plan, which are detailed and accurate. The school rightly prides itself on the learning opportunities it provides for staff, who are encouraged to read widely and discuss and debate all aspects of teaching and learning. Staff's immersion in innovative educational practice plays an important part in the school's success.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and contributes greatly to the outstanding practice of teachers and excellent outcomes for pupils. This is because teachers are highly reflective and relish chances to grow and hone their skills. Senior leaders are adept at fostering the abilities and talents of staff by offering continual 'in the moment' opportunities to refine their practice, for example through impromptu 'drop-ins' to lessons, team teaching and observing each other teach. This has been particularly effective in rapidly developing new teachers and maintaining consistency of classroom approach and high expectations.
- Middle leaders are encouraged to play an active role in the school's success as combined curriculum and year group team leaders. They are held accountable for the learning and achievement of every pupil across their three classes of responsibility and work closely with the other teachers in their year group. They meet every evening with their team to reflect on the day's lessons and together adapt plans for the next day. This ensures that pupils' needs and next steps are being constantly reviewed. It also offers another excellent opportunity to support and guide new teachers.
- Senior leaders comprehensively gather assessment information which is used to discuss pupils' learning with teachers. Teachers' assessments are used effectively to precisely pinpoint opportunities to move pupils on in their learning. This is evident for all groups of pupils including the most able, disadvantaged and those that are struggling and need help to catch up.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in school is innovative and far-reaching. Electronic tablets are used by staff and pupils in all aspects of learning, from collecting assessment information to discussing a pupil's work in a lesson. They are also used to offer immediate feedback to pupils and for pupils to conduct their own research. The school's use of ICT also adds a richness and fun to learning activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 were animated using their tablets to retell the story of

'Aliens Love Underpants' by Claire Freedman. The positive impact of ICT on the curriculum and on learning is immense and permeates through everything the school does.

- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to reduce any barriers to learning that may be experienced by disadvantaged pupils. The progress of pupils supported by this funding is monitored rigorously. The impact of the use of pupil premium funding is evaluated carefully by the headteacher and governors. The targeted use of the funding enables disadvantaged pupils to be successful and be part of everything the school has to offer.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is also used well. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities during and after school, such as cheerleading, cross country, zumba and dance. There are also opportunities for pupils to be involved in sports competitions with other schools in local and national events such as football and the Youth Games. Sports coaches visit school regularly to offer activities. Pupils talk enthusiastically about taking part in a wide range of sporting opportunities. The funding has also enhanced teachers' own skills in delivering quality sports and PE lessons.
- The leadership and organisation of special educational needs provision and funding are very effective. Teachers identify pupils' needs swiftly. They use good-quality resources, ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive in their learning and personal and social development.
- The school offers a diverse and broad curriculum that excites pupils and contributes to their enjoyment of learning. Subjects such as science, history and particularly music are popular with pupils because they are well taught and, as one pupil explained, 'You learn lots of things you didn't know before.' Pupils are offered an exciting range of opportunities, including orienteering, debating and visiting places such as the Houses of Parliament in London. However, leaders have correctly identified that tracking pupils' progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics is not as highly developed as it could be. As a result, leaders and governors do not have a thorough enough overview of learning and achievement across the wider curriculum.
- The excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that the school is a calm and considerate environment where pupils mix happily together. Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn about the wider community, respecting people from different backgrounds and with different characteristics. They raise funds for charities and learn about tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils also benefit from many and varied after-school clubs including gardening, photography, taekwondo, Mandarin Chinese and 'dancing with choir'.
- The school demonstrates innovative practice in teaching and learning. As a result, it is often asked to share its expertise with other schools. Leaders also work alongside local schools on assessment, curriculum development and other local initiatives. The headteacher actively seeks to work with secondary-school colleagues to ensure high-quality transition links for pupils. He is keen to ensure that pupils' high achievement and very positive attitude to learning are built upon as pupils go on to the next phase in their school career. However, this area of work is still developing.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective.
- Governors know their school well and are confident to ask challenging questions. They are conscientious in their responsibilities and enjoy taking part and contributing to the life of the school.
- The attributes of the governing body have been utilised well to ensure that governors' expertise benefits the school. Governors effectively lend their skills to aspects of the school's development and monitoring of improvement. As a result, they make an important contribution to raising standards in the school.
- The governing body has a good understanding of performance management procedures and, as well as supporting the headteacher in holding staff to account, ensures that the management of teachers' pay is effective.
- The governing body makes sure that the pupil premium and the PE and sport funding are spent effectively and make a difference for pupils.
- The governing body is diligent in its responsibilities to safeguard pupils and to this end has appointed a safeguarding governor to oversee and monitor safeguarding and welfare-related matters. The governing body also understands its responsibilities regarding internet safety and has ensured that filtering measures are in place for the school's internet and online services.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems are in place, which are understood by staff. There is a clear message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Records are detailed and kept securely. Staff undertake regular and appropriate training and safeguarding has a high priority in school. There are updates on related issues as they arise, including those related to keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare. Effective relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Leaders successfully drive to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning so that pupils make outstanding progress.
- There are a number of newly qualified and recently qualified teachers in school. Their induction, training and day-to-day support have been exemplary. Consequently, these teachers have 'hit the ground running' and the vast majority are already offering a similarly high standard of teaching and learning to the more established teachers. Where they are not quite up to speed, they are learning fast.
- The teaching at Layton is characterised by friendly, warm relationships between staff and pupils. The extremely well organised lessons balance the needs of pupils with

different abilities very effectively. The learning environment is stimulating and industrious. Staff have high expectations of pupils in both their learning and their behaviour. Pupils rise to this by working hard and taking an active, enthusiastic role in what they do. Pupils enjoy their learning enormously, saying 'what we learn is fun' and that 'we have a responsibility for our own learning'.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teachers use this knowledge with confidence to constantly challenge and extend pupils' thinking. There is a sense of pace in lessons and a 'buzz' about learning. Adults ask just the right questions to aid pupils' thinking, draw out learning and help them move on. As a result, teachers instantly know when to go deeper into concepts with the most able pupils and when other pupils need more time or help to secure new skills.
- Teachers and leaders check pupils' learning regularly. The whole staff team is very confident in using the assessment system and use it to great effect. Adults' constant check of individual pupils' understanding within the lesson makes an important contribution to the secure progress that pupils make in their learning.
- The use of ICT makes an impressive contribution to teachers' ability to respond to pupils' learning needs and to give immediate feedback about their work. Electronic tablets are used to check pupils' grasp of new knowledge. They are also used to share pupils' work within the lesson and to enable immediate discussion and instant feedback as to strengths and where a piece of work could be improved. If a pupil is unsure about the meaning of a word or concept, the tablets are used adeptly to encourage pupils to seek the answer. For example, in an English lesson, some pupils were unsure of what continents were. The teacher asked them to quickly look it up. Instantly, pupils had a map indicating the continents of the world up on their screens. The teacher briefly checked understanding and resumed the main focus of the lesson.
- Misconceptions are celebrated as opportunities to learn. In lessons, pupils are consistently encouraged to share their 'best mistake', so that this can be discussed openly and honestly by the class. Pupils relish this opportunity; they listen attentively to pupils' explanations and either agree or respectfully ask to challenge what is being said, offering their own understanding and thoughts. Consequently, pupils are self-assured to think through their learning, drawing on what they already know that can help them solve a problem and create new solutions.
- Where pupils struggle with their learning, a very effective range of learning opportunities helps them catch up. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress.
- For those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the support offered is broad, clearly targeted and of an excellent quality. Teachers plan additional support very well, resulting in many of the pupils being able to work at the same level as their peers. Pupils that are not able to do this still make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- The development of reading, writing, grammar and mathematical skills is a high priority in school and is exemplary. Texts are used extremely effectively in each class to create a range of interesting and stimulating activities in both reading and writing. There are numerous chances for pupils to write at length in subjects such as history, geography and science. This helps pupils to extend their learning and apply their skills in a range of ways. Mathematics is a particular strength throughout school. Many opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts are offered to all year groups

and all abilities. This has enabled pupils to develop excellent skills and deepen conceptual understanding very effectively.

- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, or who spoke to the inspector in the playground, felt that their children were well taught. The majority felt that the quality of information given to them about their children's learning was valuable and of a good quality. However, some would like to receive more information during the year about the progress their children are making and their next steps, so they can support them at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The importance placed on pupils' personal development and welfare is central and very visible in school. Staff and governors are conscientious in their responsibility to ensure that the school provides a safe, nurturing environment in which pupils can thrive and succeed.
- Staff treat pupils with consideration and ensure that everyone feels welcome and valued. Adults model respectful and caring behaviour in lessons, around school and in the way they engage with pupils. As a result, pupils behave similarly and are thoughtful and compassionate citizens.
- The very large majority of parents spoken to by inspectors and those who responded to Parent View expressed praise for the school and the work of the staff. Parents felt that their children were happy and well looked after. A number of parents were keen to say that their children were thriving. They put this down to the staff's skills at nurturing and building confidence.
- Pupils told inspectors how proud they were of their school and how they were well looked after by adults. The vast majority of pupils, throughout key stages 1 and 2, are confident learners who feel involved in their own learning. The school has focused on developing a 'can do' attitude to everything new they encounter. Pupils make a valuable contribution to others' learning by offering their help and support. For example, pupils indicate how confident they are about what they are learning by placing a green, orange or red cup in front of them. If a cup is orange or red, without hesitation, another pupil will get up and talk through the task or concept with their peer. Frequently, the cup is then changed to green, indicating that they now understand.
- Pupils were unanimous in their view that they felt safe in school and all knew how to keep themselves safe, personally and online. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the school. One such example is 'digital leaders', who have made a valuable contribution to helping to make sure that pupils know how to stay safe on the internet. They developed a video for the school on internet safety, which is regularly broadcast on various monitors around school. This video has been so successful that it is now used as an example of good practice across the local authority.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably around school. They are extremely polite and well-mannered and can regularly be heard asking adults and each other how they are, and opening doors for each other. They are courteous when speaking to adults and their peers, politely asking to challenge what someone has said in a lesson and waiting patiently until it is their turn to speak.
- There is a very productive atmosphere in the classrooms. Pupils are encouraged and confident to work without the constant attention of an adult. They are attentive and eager to participate in lessons, visibly enjoying activities. They view learning as very important to them, valuing it highly, which shows in their excellent attitude to learning.
- Pupils are fully aware of how to behave and the consequences of poor behaviour. They say that incidents of inappropriate behaviour do happen but are infrequent. They are dealt with quickly by teachers and responded to by pupils appropriately. There is no incident of permanent exclusion in school. The historic spate of fixed-term exclusions has reduced and they are now rare. The school's records indicate that incidents of derogatory, racist or homophobic language are uncommon.
- A very small number of parents expressed a concern about bullying in school. However, most parents who shared their views with inspectors or on Parent View either did not consider bullying an issue that they were aware of or, if they did, stated that bullying was rare and quickly followed up by the school. Pupils confirmed that bullying was unusual and felt that adults dealt with any situations quickly.
- Pupils enjoy school, as demonstrated by their high level of attendance; currently just above that of other pupils nationally. There are meticulous and effective systems for monitoring absence. Good attendance is rewarded and has a high profile in school. Persistent absence in school is below that of other pupils nationally. The few pupils that are persistently absent are given appropriate support which ensures that they are soon back on track.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Senior leaders and governors are passionate about ensuring the highest possible standards for every pupil. As a result, pupils' achievement has continued to improve and outcomes are now outstanding across the whole school.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, spelling and punctuation was well above that found nationally. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving higher standards was also above that of pupils nationally. Pupils attained particularly well at higher standards in mathematics and in reading, writing and mathematics combined, placing them well above pupils of a similar age nationally.
- Since the previous inspection, achievement has steadily improved at the end of key stage 1, with most pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. Pupils also achieved well at greater depth in all three

subjects. In 2016 pupils' attainment was well above pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and in 2017 in reading.

- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the national screening check for phonics at the end of Year 1 has risen significantly. Consequently, for the last three years, pupils have achieved above other pupils nationally.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk excitedly about books. Pupils who struggle with reading have excellent support to practise skills and catch up rapidly. Pupils are very proud of the progress they make. The most able readers are also supported to develop further their understanding of texts and indulge in a love of books. For pupils that are not able to read to someone at home each night, there is an opportunity for some pupils to read to their electronic tablet. This is then brought back into school and a teacher will listen and offer immediate support and feedback.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they make outstanding progress by the end of key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment is similar to other pupils in school and above others nationally. This is because the school monitors the progress of these pupils effectively and regularly ensures that they are supported well to improve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good and often outstanding progress from their starting points. The excellent support offered by teachers and teaching assistants is very effective and ensures that pupils succeed in their learning.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, all most-able pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Well over half reached higher standards in reading, over a half in writing and nearly all most-able pupils reached higher standards in mathematics. In 2016 all most-able pupils reached higher standards in writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age and occasionally well below. Skills are least developed in literacy, mathematics and communication. Children make rapid progress. They benefit from a vibrant and stimulating environment in which to learn. This is coupled with high expectations by adults, to make sure that children thrive and enjoy a very positive start to school life.
- Over the last three years there has been a steady improvement in the proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of Reception. Standards are now comparable to national figures. This represents children's very strong progress from their starting points and ensures that all are well prepared and confident to begin in Year 1.
- The early years provision is led confidently. Leaders have a clear view about the strengths and how to improve provision and children's learning successfully. These improvements are based on a thorough understanding of children's development as well as flexibility to adapt to the individual needs of pupils and ambition for them.
- Safeguarding is effective. Risk assessments are appropriate and the classrooms are a

safe environment, inside and out, while still allowing children to try out new experiences and take appropriate risks.

- The way that teachers assess and track children's learning is of a similar high quality to the rest of school. This information is gathered constantly and used effectively to plan a curriculum for children that is both interesting and relevant. As a result, adults know and respond to the individual learning needs of children to great effect, including the most able and children that are disadvantaged. This ensures that additional funding is used very effectively to provide resources and support for disadvantaged children.
- Throughout the three classes provision is highly consistent. It is skilfully organised and routines are established very quickly. Teachers create a rich and varied learning environment for all children, both inside and outdoors. As a result, children are excited about their learning and confident in their abilities. Activities are fun and are led regularly by the interests of the children. They capture their imagination and allow them to practise their skills. For example, children were immersed in learning connected to the story of 'Incy, wincy spider'. They counted legs, traced the shapes of webs with glitter to develop their writing skills and sang the song to each other as they found hidden spiders in the sandpit.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults demonstrate excellent knowledge about young children's learning and are highly skilled at asking questions to draw out children's understanding and extend them to think more deeply about their learning. The importance placed on fostering reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematical skills is very evident, with regular chances for children to write, practise their letters and sounds, and use numbers in all that they do. Children are already confident to speak in sentences to adults and their peers.
- Independence is encouraged as soon as children start Reception. Consequently, only five weeks into the school year they are happy to get themselves ready to learn. They confidently put waterproofs and wellies on to play outside and will sit at activities unsupported by adults, listen and watch the demonstration of an activity on an electronic tablet, and follow the instructions to complete a task.
- The strong emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment is evident from the very positive relationships adults have with children. Children play and learn together extremely well. For example, after children had built a bridge with planks and crates, they volunteered to hold each other's hands to walk across. Children have an excellent attitude to learning and behaviour.
- Staff and parents have extremely positive relationships. Leaders take time to get to know children and families to ensure that the start to school life is as smooth as possible. During the year, there are opportunities to share and involve parents in their children's learning by, for example, attending events such as 'stay and play'. In turn, parents are highly appreciative of the way their children thrive and grow in a stimulating and happy environment. As one parent said, 'there are always big smiles from my son on the way to school'.

School details

Unique reference number	119246
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	10032415

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	598
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Fisher
Headteacher	Jonathan Clucas
Telephone number	01253 392 179
Website	www.layton.blackpool.sch.uk
Email address	jonathan.clucas@layton.blackpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 April 2013

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- In 2016, the school far exceeded the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. They observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also observed pupils at playtime and during lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books, including the books of children in the early years.
- An inspector listened to a small number of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator and early years leader. They also met with the colleagues responsible for safeguarding and attendance, and a group of middle leaders.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority and two external school advisors.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with an inspector and inspectors also spoke informally with pupils at playtimes and around school.
- Inspectors took account of 53 responses to a staff questionnaire and eight responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- They also took account of 27 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and talked briefly with a number of parents before school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: information on pupils' attainment and progress; the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan; records of checks on the quality of teaching and the school's curriculum planning documents. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Blackburne	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Williamson	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector
Kathleen McArthur	Ofsted Inspector

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