

St Lawrence CofE Aided Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125179
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381059
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Cameron
Headteacher	Damian Tucker
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 September 2008
School address	Church Road East Molesey KT8 9DR
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons, taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils, and inspectors spoke to some parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation about pupils' progress and policies, particularly those for safeguarding, as well as school development planning and evidence of self-evaluation. They considered 130 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is teaching challenging enough to ensure pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress?
- How effective are efforts to improve progress in English and mathematics?
- How well do leaders identify areas for improvement and act on them to help improve pupils' progress?

Information about the school

St Lawrence CofE Aided Junior is a larger than average-sized school and pupils come mainly from a White British heritage. A small proportion has English as an additional language. Arabic, Bengali and Urdu are the most commonly spoken other languages and no pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Healthy School award, Sportsmark, Eco award and the International award. The school runs an after-school club. The headteacher took up appointment at Easter 2011 and about three quarters of the staff have changed over the last school year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Lawrence CoE Junior is a satisfactory and improving school. Under new leadership, past underachievement is being rectified and a downward trend is being reversed. Several areas of the school's work are improving and past strengths are being maintained and improved. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. It is based on effective links with external agencies and promotes the welfare of pupils successfully. Parents and carers are mostly pleased with the school and recognise where improvements are taking place. One wrote 'Our children are extremely happy here' and another, 'Pupils are always encouraged in their learning with enthusiasm from their teachers.'

Pupils' attainment is above average and some reach high levels of attainment. Their numeracy skills are generally good and they carry out mental calculations well. They know their multiplication tables and can turn mathematical problems presented to them in words into calculations. For most pupils, literacy skills are above average. However, careless spelling and untidy writing by some pupils spoils overall performance. In addition, some pupils do not use a wide enough range of complex sentence structures consistently to illustrate their knowledge, understanding or imagination. Overall, pupils' progress is satisfactory and it is improving. For some pupils, it is good. Boys and girls make similar progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

The improving pace of progress is a result of teaching that is generally satisfactory and some good teaching. Teaching is improving. Increasingly, work is matched to pupils' learning needs and is based on accurate assessment of attainment. However, the practice is not fully established and sometimes work is not challenging enough, especially for the most-able pupils. Marking does not always tell pupils what the next steps in their learning are. That slows the progress of some pupils. Occasionally, too much time is spent talking about the work at the start of lessons, with not enough time given for pupils to learn for themselves. Questioning is generally good and most pupils discuss their ideas confidently. The quality of classroom support is improving as it is targeted increasingly to where pupils need help and guidance. The curriculum is well planned, with a wide range of trips, visitors and activity weeks to engage pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Nevertheless, there are not enough planned activities in all subjects that encourage pupils to develop their basic skills, especially writing. There is a wide range of well-supported out-of-school sports and other activities.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and their levels of attendance are high. They

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take on a wide range of activities in school which involve them in helping each other, being aware of disadvantaged people around the world, taking responsibility for the environment, and working with the local church. They feel safe and confident that rare unacceptable behaviour and bullying are dealt with well. They have a good understanding of the importance of following healthy lifestyles.

Leaders and managers have high expectations for how the school should improve. They have galvanised staff into starting to take action to improve teaching and to use assessment information to match work to pupils' learning needs. With very clear direction from the headteacher and accurate self-evaluation, the school has correctly identified the areas it needs to work on to improve pupils' progress. The governing body is increasingly well informed about school developments and is taking steps quickly to ensure it can challenge and support the school's improvements. Plans to promote improvement are at an early stage of implementation, but they provide a good foundation on which the school can build its success. Given that the impact of efforts to improve is at an early stage, the capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in literacy by ensuring that pupils:
 - write neatly and accurately
 - spell accurately
 - use complex sentence structures to express their ideas and understanding.

- Improve learning by ensuring that:
 - work is always challenging, especially for the most-able pupils
 - work is matched closely to the learning needs of all pupils
 - pupils know what the next steps in their learning are and what they need to do to achieve them
 - lessons are timed to make sure pupils have plenty of time for their own learning
 - opportunities in all subjects develop and consolidate pupils' literacy skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils start school with above-average levels of attainment. By Year 6, they have a wide vocabulary, write imaginatively and most use complex sentence structures to express their knowledge and to describe what they think. For example, one pupil produced a poem, modelled on that of a poet the class had studied, to describe the weather, with imaginative writing about the sun. The oldest pupils speak articulately, expressing their understanding well and using connectives to link associated ideas in

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their discussions. However, throughout the school, some pupils do not always write in the same imaginative way as they speak and spelling and presentation of work is sometimes careless. Pupils’ numeracy skills are good. Their understanding of mathematical processes is good. Progress is improving throughout the school. It is good in several classes and is best in Year 6. For example, in a class of lower-attaining pupils, some pupils made very good progress in their ability to add and subtract decimal numbers. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as a result of the effective support they receive.

Pupils make good contributions to the life of the school. Many are involved in environmental work, energy conservation activities, growing vegetables, and in managing waste, for which the school has earned the Eco award. Pupils raise money for local and national charities and take part in many of the local church activities. The school council voices pupil concerns to staff, identifies outdoor resources that are needed, and organises and manages fund-raising activities that help develop the pupils’ business enterprise skills. The pupils are considerate towards each other and play and work together well. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. High levels of take-up of sports and good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise are reflected in the Healthy School award and Sportsmark held by the school.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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Generally, lessons are well planned and, although they are sometimes a little slow to move on to activities that engage pupils in learning, work is interesting and catches pupils’ attention successfully. Relationships are good and pupils are confident in expressing their ideas. In the best lessons seen, work was demanding and organised well to stretch pupils. For example, in a lesson on developing pupils’ addition skills, clear explanation about what the teacher’s expectations were, good exemplification of mathematical processes, and opportunities for pupils to practise taught procedures led to good learning by most pupils. Nevertheless, a tendency in some lessons for all pupils to be given the same tasks means that some pupils work through too many simple problems before reaching the ones that stretch them mentally. Marking is frequent and tells pupils how well they have done, but often does not point out what the next steps in learning are, set extra tasks or pose questions to challenge the pupils further.

The curriculum is stimulating and taught through a sound range of topics that link subjects together well. ‘Theme weeks’ provide good opportunities for pupils to work on projects in depth, which they enjoy. Visits to museums, outdoor activity centres and residential trips enrich pupils’ experiences. Science projects capture pupils’ imagination and the increasing use of computers helps improve pupils’ information and communication technology (ICT) skills. However, opportunities are missed to build on pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. Opportunities to look at the art, history and geography of other countries contribute well to pupils’ understanding of the values and traditions of other cultures.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving under new leadership and leading to faster progress than in recent years. Support for pupils whose challenging circumstances may make them vulnerable is good. Relationships with the pupils’ homes are good and contribute effectively to high levels of attendance. Parents and carers are well informed about their children’s progress. The school has effective links with infant and secondary schools and transfer arrangements work well. Pupils feel confident going to any adult for help. Pupils attending the after-school club are cared for well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

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The headteacher has immediately set about establishing a new vision for how the school should improve and has engaged all staff successfully in helping the school make progress. All in leadership roles are supported well in initiating improvements. Many of the improvements are at an early stage of implementation, but are evident in the early signs of increasing pace of progress in mathematics and improving use of assessment. Plans to share effective teaching skills are detailed, but it is too early for them to be implemented. Members of the governing body are attached to particular areas of the school’s work and visit school with mounting frequency. The governing body’s skill in challenging the school is improving so that it can contribute actively to school improvement. The school’s engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory and improving, with recent increased levels of communication to inform parents and carers of school activities, class curriculum plans, opportunities to visit the school and access to its virtual learning platform. The school runs well-attended numeracy and literacy activities for parents and carers to help them support pupils’ learning. Partnerships with other schools, the local authority and external agencies promote pupils’ welfare effectively and increasingly help support the curriculum and provide professional training for staff. The school promotes community cohesion well. It has effective local links and several overseas schools, which it uses effectively to support the curriculum and to enhance pupils’ respect and understanding of different cultures around the world. For that work, it has earned the International School award.

Safeguarding requirements are met fully and the school works hard to ensure all staff are fully up to date with their training. Taking into account the overall satisfactory, though slightly uneven, progress made by pupils, the school’s promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Procedures to eliminate all forms of discrimination are effective.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Views of parents and carers

Just under half of parents and carers returned the questionnaire and the majority of responses were positive and supported the school. A small proportion of parents and carers were critical of how much progress pupils made, the level of support for parents and carers to help their children learn, how well the school met pupils' learning needs and how well the school informs them of their children's progress. Inspectors followed up all issues raised. They found that the concerns were partly accurate in the recent past, but improvements have been made in all of those areas. A smaller proportion of parents and carers expressed concern at how well the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors saw only good behaviour and pupils said that there was very little poor behaviour and that it did not interfere in their learning. Parents and carers felt that their children enjoyed school and were safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Lawrence CofE Voluntary Aided Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 315 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	44	67	52	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	71	55	54	42	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	30	23	80	62	11	8	5	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	20	78	60	18	14	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	25	82	63	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	33	25	73	56	16	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	28	82	63	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	25	78	60	10	8	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	32	25	76	58	14	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	26	72	55	12	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	19	80	62	10	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	30	23	78	60	6	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	37	28	82	63	6	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Lawrence CofE Aided Junior School, East Molesey
KT8 9DR**

Thank you for welcoming us in such a friendly way when we visited you. You gave us a lot of useful information. We judged that you are at a satisfactory and improving school. You make satisfactory progress and your progress is improving. The following things are particular strengths of the school.

- Some teaching is good and, overall, teaching is improving. The school provides a wide range of activities to help you enjoy learning.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body are keen to make sure you make better progress and are working hard to make sure this happens.
- Many of you have responsibilities that you carry out well.
- You are very considerate towards each other, to other people and to others less fortunate than yourselves.
- You behave well and your attendance is high.
- You feel safe and are looked after well.
- You know how to stay healthy. You eat sensibly and take part in lots of physical activities.

In order for the school to be even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- help you to write neatly and accurately, spell carefully and use sentences with connectives and adjectives whenever you can
- make sure work is always challenging and matched to your learning needs, that you know how to make the next steps in learning, have opportunities in lessons to learn for yourselves, and that there are opportunities in all subjects to practise and improve your literacy skills.

All of you can help by making sure you are careful with spelling and punctuation, write neatly, and tell the teacher if you find work too easy.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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