

# St Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123496
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	380671
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Sheelagh Barnes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lisa Howles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Parton (Acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Preston-upon-the-Wealdmoors Telford TF6 6DH
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<b>Fax number</b>	01952 387782
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380671



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Sheelagh Barnes

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited nine lessons taught by four teachers. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curriculum planning documents, policies and documents relating to safeguarding and examples of the ways in which the school supports different groups of pupils. The inspector also analysed completed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 39 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school is a much smaller-than-average-sized rural primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes in the afternoons and four classes during the mornings. There has been an acting headteacher since Easter 2012, who has a substantial teaching commitment. The school meets the government's current floor standards which determine the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

There is a breakfast and after-school club that uses the school facilities but is managed separately and was not part of this inspection.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because teaching does not enable pupils to make good progress in developing skills, particularly in mathematics and in writing. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make only satisfactory progress. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment in Year 6 is broadly average. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning throughout the school. They make more consistent progress in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils from all groups are given work that broadly meets their needs, but are not challenged enough to develop their independent learning and research skills. The pace of learning is sometimes not brisk enough and success criteria not sharp enough. Opportunities for pupils to assess how well they have done are too few for them to make better than satisfactory progress.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are obedient and thoughtful; they are considerate of others and interact together very well. They engage well with their learning, particularly where tasks are skilfully chosen and interesting. Behaviour is closely monitored and pupils say they feel safe in school. There are very few incidents of any form of bullying and those that occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Attendance and punctuality are good.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear, shared vision for the school’s development. The morale of staff, pupils, parents and carers is good and stakeholders share a common set of values. Improvements have been secured and sustained in assessment and the setting and sharing of targets for the next steps in learning for each pupil. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage limits children’s explorative and investigative skills by

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providing too few opportunities for child-initiated activities, particularly outdoors.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' learning from satisfactory to good by:
  - ensuring that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing for a range of purposes
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to carry out practical and investigational activities in mathematics
  - ensuring that teachers' explanations of the tasks set are clear but brief, allowing pupils greater opportunity to investigate and make deductions for themselves.
  - placing greater emphasis on assessment and evaluation of work by and with pupils
  - ensuring homework allocation follows the school agreed policy more closely in amount, regularity and purpose.
  
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by April 2013, by:
  - increasing the opportunities for children to explore and investigate through child-initiated activities
  - enhancing and making full use of the outdoor environment to promote all aspects of learning for young children.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Inspection findings that pupils' achievement is satisfactory were endorsed by most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, who were satisfied that their children were making some progress. The majority of pupils thought that they made progress at least some of the time. More-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as their peers. There is no consistent pattern of differences in achievement throughout the school.

Children's skills and knowledge when they join the Reception vary year-on-year due to the very small size of each year group, but are generally in line with those expected for their age. Their current entry standard represents a change since the previous inspection, when they were generally above age-related expectations. Children work together happily in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enjoy school. They make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 with broadly average levels of attainment. However, much of the learning in Reception is adult directed to the extent that there are missed opportunities for children to learn from tasks they have

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selected for themselves. Outdoor provision and learning are too limited. The school has recently adopted a new approach to the teaching of early reading skills and phonics (the links between sounds and letters), which is beginning to have a positive impact on the development of reading. Attainment in reading is in line with the levels expected for pupils' ages at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory and attainment broadly average. In most lessons, pupils are keen to learn. When tasks are matched to pupils' needs and ability levels and they have a clear understanding of the intended learning, they make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Often, however, the work set is not pitched at the precise level that would promote good learning. This is particularly the case in a significant proportion of literacy and mathematics lessons, where some pupils are given work that is too difficult and some too easy for them and as a result they make only satisfactory progress. However, in a lesson linking history to mathematics, pupils took part in an 'archaeological dig' which fired their enthusiasm. The adults leading the session carefully tailored their questioning to each pupil's precise needs and provided good challenge for all. As a result, these pupils made generally good gains in their learning – particularly in developing their confidence in mathematics.

### **Quality of teaching**

Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Teachers often provide time to reflect, supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Although the inspector saw some good teaching, it is satisfactory overall because lessons are often not planned accurately enough to meet pupils' learning needs to enable them to make better than satisfactory progress. The teaching of reading has improved by ensuring a consistent approach to teaching about letters and the sounds they make. Most pupils and their parents and carers, were positive about teaching in their responses to the inspection questionnaires.

Teachers try hard to match topics to pupils' needs and interests, such as mathematics tasks linked to the Olympics. Most teaching is carefully structured and learning objectives matched to the curriculum. There is some good use of information and communication technology to promote learning. There has been improvement in the regard teachers take of what pupils have already learnt and the standards they have attained. However, some sessions are not challenging enough for some pupils, and other sessions not practical enough for others, slowing the progress pupils make. In several lessons observed, too much time was spent on instruction and too little on actual learning.

Marking is thorough and regular. Pupils are increasingly involved in understanding what they need to do to improve their work. Class discussions are undertaken at the end of lessons to recap what has been achieved. However, these do not always place more than satisfactory emphasis on involving pupils meaningfully in the assessment of how well they have done and what they have attained. Homework is given and there is a clear homework policy, but its application is inconsistent. Parents and

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pupils say, and inspection evidence confirms, that sometimes very little homework is given and on other occasions a great deal. Opportunities are missed for homework to give pupils practice in writing for different and real purposes, or to develop the skills they need to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. In mathematics, some staff hurry pupils towards a correct answer, rather than taking time for pupils to fully understand the process. The pupils are not always given sufficient time and opportunity to work things out for themselves and there is not always enough emphasis on practical and investigational work. As a consequence, pupils' problem-solving skills are not as well developed as other aspects of their mathematics, and prevent their progress from being better than satisfactory.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs shows similar variation to that of others. Although in some cases activities are well matched to pupils' needs, teachers do not always do enough to tailor class sessions to follow the strategies set out in pupils' individual education plans.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' above-average attendance and punctuality demonstrate how much they enjoy coming to school. Inspection findings that good behaviour is the norm are fully endorsed by the views of parents, carers and pupils themselves, who are positive in their views about the good standard of behaviour. Little time is wasted because of behaviour, as pupils want to learn. Pupils say they feel very safe in the school 'because it is so small and everybody knows everyone else', and this was further confirmed by the parental questionnaire responses. Pupils confidently explain what constitutes unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Very few parents or pupils expressed concerns in their responses regarding bullying. Pupils said the school tackled any bullying very effectively. One older boy explained, 'Behaviour is generally good. Sometimes, a few people get a bit carried away, but it all gets quickly sorted out.'

The school provides a positive ethos for learning. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes to learning and conduct themselves well, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are positive and proactive in supporting each other in the playground and in lessons. Even when lessons are not very stimulating, pupils' attitudes and behaviour remain positive. Behaviour management is consistent and effective. Pupils do as they are told. However, because they are so responsive to teachers, there are fewer opportunities for them to make decisions for themselves about safe choices, such as when moving between the field and the classroom. Pupils said that, 'One of the best things about this school is that people here take care of you.' Positive guidance and support for conduct effectively enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils sing enthusiastically in assembly and reflect on the importance of being thoughtful and generous to others.

**Leadership and management**

All staff and the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths

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and weaknesses. They share a common aim to improve the outcomes for pupils. The school has been successful in making improvements, most notably in improving and developing new assessment systems to increase the accuracy of pupil tracking data. Teachers are more easily able to target specific pupils whose learning slows and identify suitable intervention activities leading to better progress for these pupils. The self-evaluation undertaken by the school is accurate, with priorities for development embedded in the school improvement plan. The school's capacity to improve is shown by a trend of steady, sustained, improvement in achievement, supported by pupils' invariably good behaviour. The issues for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. There is sound accountability through performance management. Leaders review the progress of individual pupils regularly and monitor teachers' work to improve teaching, especially the quality and use of assessment. However, many lessons still lack the pace and challenge to accelerate pupils' progress.

The curriculum is mainly focused on topic-based work, planned to enthuse pupils, and on increasing the opportunities for them to develop their skills across the whole syllabus. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides suitable topics, including looking at plants and mini-beasts. However, limited use is made of the outdoor environment, and there is an imbalance between child- and adult-initiated learning, which is restricting the children's development of their investigative and independent learning skills.

The school ensures that it develops pupils' understanding of other cultures through visits and links with other schools, such as the link with a school in Africa. Discrimination is tackled effectively. Leaders and the governing body ensure that all pupils have equal access to every opportunity at the school, which is a very inclusive and cohesive community. Safeguarding procedures are managed effectively. All safeguarding requirements are met. All members of staff are fully trained to protect children well.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



25 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Telford, TF6 6DH**

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I spoke with many of you in discussions, while looking at your work and while hearing some of you read. Your views were very valuable in helping me reach my conclusions. I was pleased to hear that you feel safe at school and feel that you are cared for well.

You go to a satisfactory school. My main findings are as follows.

- You make satisfactory progress and are on target to achieve standards in line with those expected for your ages.
- Teaching is satisfactory and marking helps you to improve your work.
- Your behaviour round the school and in lessons is good and the school provides well for your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's leaders have focused well on improving teaching and the progress you make.

To carry on making your school even better, I have asked the headteacher and staff to do the following things.

- Improve the teaching of writing and mathematics, so that you make better progress in these.
- Give more opportunities for children in the Reception class to work outside and to take more responsibility for their own learning.

You can help the school improve by continuing to be as well behaved as you are now, always getting on with your work in lessons and trying your best at all times.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sheelagh Barnes  
Lead inspector

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