

St Lawrence Church of England Primary School

Lower Church Road, Skellingthorpe, Lincoln, LN6 5UZ

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards in reading, writing, English and mathematics. The Reception class helps children to achieve well and make good progress.
- Teaching is usually at least good, and much is outstanding. It helps pupils learn successfully and make good progress.
- Pupils are, without exception, polite and friendly. They come to school regularly – more so than in most other schools.
- The headteacher, other leaders and governors make sure that teaching and pupils' achievement are good. They aim for the highest standards that pupils are capable of and the best teaching possible to improve the school even more.
- The school encourages pupils to develop their creative instincts well through art and music. It also helps them to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils' well-being are rigorous.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers spend too long explaining what pupils are going to learn at the start of lessons. This stops the pupils getting on with the learning more quickly.
- Work in lessons is not always set at the right level for all pupils, particularly for those who learn quickly.
- Very occasionally, a few pupils lose concentration in class and try to distract others from their work. Teachers do not always remind pupils quickly enough of what they should be doing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half-a-day's notice.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons taught by eight teachers for a total of approximately seven hours. The inspectors spoke with four different groups of pupils, listened to pupils read, spoke with parents, examined work in pupils' books and held meetings with staff and members of the governing body.
- The inspector looked closely at the school's methods for measuring the rate at which pupils make progress, checking their reliability and accuracy. He considered a range of school documentation, records of meetings and work with the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of staff responses to the Ofsted questionnaire.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Lawrence is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- All pupils are white, almost all are British. All speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school has faced staffing difficulties in recent years.
- The school holds several awards, including the Investors in People award and Activemark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from being usually good and often outstanding to be consistently of the highest quality so as to improve all pupils' achievement and attainment further, especially that of the more able by:
 - ensuring that work in lessons is always set at the right level for every pupil
 - spending less time telling pupils what they have to learn and providing more opportunities for them to learn things for themselves.
- Leaders and managers should monitor more closely how well pupils are working in lessons and help teachers, where necessary, to manage classes better so that learning always runs at a brisk pace.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and there are no significant differences in the progress of boys and girls. The legacy of previously slow learning has been almost completely eradicated.
- Although children have a wide variety of pre-school experience, their skills on entry to Reception class are largely typical of those expected for their age.
- Children achieve well in the Reception class. They settle quickly and happily into a limited, but well-resourced and skilfully staffed, learning environment. The good relationships and spirit of curiosity that they develop here provide a solid base for their good personal development as they grow older. They enter Year 1 with skills and abilities at least at the levels expected for this age.
- Pupils continue to achieve well and make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. In 2012, their attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. Inspection evidence and the school's long-established and accurate tracking system shows that most pupils are, currently, making better than expected progress in English and mathematics, some significantly so.
- Attainment in reading, writing, English and mathematics was above average at the end of Year 6 in 2012. This represents solidly good progress over time when considering these pupils' starting points.
- Improvements to the teaching of phonics (how letters and the sounds they make are linked together) have markedly improved the reading standards of younger pupils in Reception class and Key Stage 1.
- Throughout the school, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium make progress similar to that of their peers, irrespective of their starting points. This is because skilful adult support for their learning ensures that all pupils have equal opportunity to access the many advantages the school has to offer.

The quality of teaching is good.

- All lessons are characterised by good relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually very positive.
- Most teaching is good, including of English and mathematics, and several examples of outstanding practice were seen. The less-effective teaching explains why pupils' progress over time is good and not outstanding, and why their achievement could be even better.
- The very best teaching gives pupils short, well-directed tasks which challenge them to use previous learning to work things out for themselves. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils learned how to improve the quality of their narrative writing by a very clear five-step process which led to rapidly deepening understanding of all pupils in use of adjectives, adverbs, similes and metaphors. Their concentration was excellent; their excitement in learning was clearly evident and their self-esteem soared.

- Teachers routinely ask rapid questions, demanding that pupils give explanations in full sentences to explain their views or opinions. This improves the clarity of their understanding and that of other pupils in the class because they are able to hear alternative thoughts, ideas and solutions.
- The pace of learning sometimes slows when teachers give overly long explanations at the start of lessons. Pupils sit listening passively rather than finding things out for themselves and improving their skills and understanding.
- Occasionally, teachers give the whole class the same piece of work to do. More-able pupils often finish very quickly. They usually sit patiently waiting for the next task but, in these situations, their learning is slower than it ought to be.
- Very occasionally, some pupils' inattention is not addressed robustly enough.
- Because they are fully included in every aspect of the school's work, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs experience the same levels of variability in teaching as their peers. However, these pupils who need extra help receive additional, well-planned and delivered support which enables them to make the same good progress as others.
- Teaching gives pupils many opportunities to develop their creativity, especially through music and art. Corridor and classroom walls are adorned with many examples of high-quality work to inspire and motivate.
- Classrooms are colourful and well resourced, and raise pupils' awareness of the world around them. Topic work gives pupils – from this relatively isolated rural community – opportunities to learn about the lives and cultures of people from different parts of the world.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good.

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary at break times and lunchtimes. At these times, they are unfailingly polite, friendly and cheerful. Detailed school records show that this is well-established practice. There have been no exclusions of any sort for 10 years.
- Pupils usually sustain their concentration well, especially when work is of a challenging and practical nature. Learning in lessons is good, and can often be outstanding. Pupils can be trusted to work independently, often without direct supervision, although some higher-attaining pupils can lose learning focus when work is too easy.
- Very occasionally, pupils do not give full attention to the teachers' instructions in lessons. Low-level inattention occasionally distracts concentration and slows learning.
- Minor instances of challenging behaviour caused by medical conditions are dealt with calmly and sensitively by staff, and regarded with sympathy by pupils. They do not interrupt learning in any way.
- Pupils can explain with confidence why they feel safe in school. No parent, carer or pupil raised any concerns about bullying or poor behaviour. Discussions with many pupils confirm that bullying is simply not an issue. Nonetheless, pupils are aware of the different types of prejudice-based bullying, and know what to do if they experience it themselves.

- All pupils in the school have some small area of responsibility, their 'personal challenge', which helps to keep the school running smoothly from day to day. Older pupils are particularly proud of the way they guide and look after younger pupils. Younger pupils are unafraid to seek help from 'the big ones'.
- Attendance rates are consistently above average.

The leadership and management are good.

- Under the leadership of the experienced and aspirational headteacher, other leaders and governors are fully committed to driving the school forward to even better teaching and achievement. They have the knowledge, skills, experience and ambition to do this.
- Staff morale is high. The adults in the school form a hard-working and effective team. They know their roles and accept their responsibilities enthusiastically.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate because it objectively measures the extent of its success against the achievement of all groups of pupils over time, compared nationally.
- Senior and subject leaders do not always check often enough on the learning taking place in lessons where pupils, very occasionally, lose concentration and attention to their work. In these situations, teachers lack training and guidance on class management.
- In addition to academic learning, the school has a strong focus on ensuring pupils' well-being. The school's values and beliefs, based on equality of opportunity for all, ensure that all pupils and particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are well supported as needed.
- Senior leaders are, themselves, good role models as successful teachers. Helpful continuing professional development opportunities for all staff have enabled the school to sustain its improvements in teaching and achievement over time, including in literacy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for. They are well mannered and listen carefully and respectfully to their classmates. There is no intolerance or discrimination here. Pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 as well-balanced young citizens, well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school's curriculum is built solidly on increasing pupils' competencies in literacy and numeracy, often through work done on themes such as 'The Romans'. This ensures that all pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, are able to make good progress over time.
- Strong links with families, based on clear communication and an open-door policy, ensure that parents are able to help their children to learn in concert with the school. The 'Share Time' programme is a good example of this.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has recently been strengthened by vigorous recruitment
 - know the school's strengths and weaknesses well
 - is rigorous in ensuring all statutory requirements, particularly for safeguarding pupils, are met

- ensures that performance management and teacher appraisal are robust and that objectives set for teachers are linked clearly to driving school improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120537
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	401947

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Hicks
Headteacher	Marion Watson
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2010
Telephone number	01522 682689
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