

# St Laurence CofE VA Primary School

Collingwood Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 1DR

## Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, despite recent improvements. Teachers do not make sure that pupils of differing abilities are suitably challenged during lessons. Some pupils are over-reliant on adults to help them with their work.
- Pupils reached lower standards in mathematics and writing at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 than those found nationally. Standards in reading were average. This has been typical over the last two years.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have been significantly lower than national averages for the last two years.
- Pupils made slower progress by the end of key stage 2 in mathematics than other pupils nationally.
- Teachers are not yet using assessment information to identify and plan pupils' next steps in learning. Some teachers do not notice quickly enough when pupils make mistakes in their work.
- Teaching in mathematics does not give pupils enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge or to explain their reasoning.
- During the autumn term of 2017, there was a significant increase in the proportion of pupils who received fixed-term exclusions.
- Recently appointed middle leaders have not had time to make an impact on pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed executive headteacher and head of school are rigorously tackling weak practice and underachievement.
- Leaders have created a culture of improvement that is valued by pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- The school's work in the early years and in early reading has resulted in improved standards and faster progress.
- The Derby Diocesan Academy Trust provides effective support for the school.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and are determined to improve pupils' achievement quickly.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and well mannered and relationships with staff are positive.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - set tasks that are consistently well matched to pupils' abilities
  - check pupils' work frequently in lessons and address errors quickly
  - reduce pupils' over-reliance on adults when completing tasks
  - use their regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress more effectively to identify successes and their next steps in learning.
- Improve standards in mathematics by making sure that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and explain their reasoning.
- Improve the personal development of all pupils, regardless of ability or background, by encouraging and supporting them to become enquiring learners who quickly gain the confidence and resilience they need to be successful.
- Maximise the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders accurately identify trends and patterns through their checks on how effective their actions have been and use this analysis to decide on priorities for improvement
  - middle and subject leaders receive training and development that give them the skills they need to have a greater impact on raising standards, especially for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the executive headteacher's appointment in January 2017, leaders have been vigorous in tackling poor practice. She has guided the school's leaders well and received good support from the head of school. As a result, leaders have not shied away from challenging weak performance among staff and underachievement among pupils. Leaders' actions are now having a positive impact on pupils' progress, although this is not yet reflected fully in published information.
- Leaders have secured a positive ethos that is supportive to staff and pupils. Staff, pupils and parents have confidence in the school's leaders and said that the school has improved rapidly during the past year. Leaders and governors work well as a team and are determined to ensure that the school's future is positive.
- The Derby Diocesan Academy Trust has provided very effective support for the school. It has contributed to improvements, particularly in the early years, in pupils' early reading skills and in the quality of teaching. The trust is ambitious and determined to make sure that that the school is as effective as it can be.
- Leaders' plans for improvement focus on the main priorities for the school. They accurately set out what needs to be improved, how this will be achieved and how success will be measured. Leaders, staff and governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They provide support and challenge to teachers and teaching assistants where teaching and learning are less strong. The impact of their work has been particularly strong in the early years.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils told inspectors about the many things that they enjoy doing in school. They explained how teachers provide experiences that have contributed towards their learning. Pupils were particularly excited about the investigative work they do in science.
- Newly qualified teachers are well supported when they join the school. They value the support and advice that they receive from leaders and their mentors. Consequently, those new to teaching quickly make a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Parents are generally positive about the school. A group of parents told inspectors that staff always make time to listen to them and deal with any concerns that they may have. Parents recognise and value the improvements that have been made by the current leaders.
- Leaders have detailed plans for using the extra funds available to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The additional funding allocated for developing sports and physical education is well spent. Leaders showed the increase in participation and staff development that this has brought about. Pupils enjoy attending the clubs and sporting activities available to them, especially 'boxercise'.
- Leaders do not evaluate well enough the wealth of information they hold about the school's performance. They do not routinely analyse the information they have to identify trends and patterns, for example in pupils' behaviour or absence. This reduces

their capacity to identify which issues are priorities for actions.

- Middle leaders do not yet carry out their roles without senior leaders' support. This is because many are new to their post. Senior leaders have ensured that middle leaders have received significant and well-planned training. This is helping them to have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. Even so, some areas of middle leadership are not strong, such as that for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

## **Governance of the school**

- The trust has provided very effective support for the local governing body. This has led to the governing body having a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Minutes from meetings of the governing body show that it is routinely holding leaders to account effectively. Governors now challenge leaders more regularly about their actions and the performance of the school.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and are determined to quickly improve pupils' achievement. They value the work of senior leaders and acknowledge the rapid improvements that they have brought about.
- Governors gain a first-hand understanding of the school through regular visits to check out the information that school leaders provide. Governors recognise the need to strengthen further their knowledge about the progress of different groups of pupils, such as that of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The nominated governor for safeguarding makes sure that the governing body understands its safeguarding responsibilities and that these are carried out well.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's records of checks on the recruitment of staff and on visitors are rigorous. The nominated safeguarding governor checks them regularly to make sure that they are up to date.
- Staff and governors understand their safeguarding duties and respond quickly to concerns. Records are detailed and well ordered. Leaders use these to identify quickly the support that is to be provided for pupils and their families. They evaluate the effect of this support well.
- The school's learning mentor understands the needs of the pupils and families that she works with. She provides timely and relevant support to families. She makes sure that external agencies are involved where needed.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They described how they make sure that they stay safe from bullying, from strangers and when they are online. They know which adults to talk to if they have a concern or worry.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. It has improved under the guidance of the executive headteacher and head of school but it is not yet good throughout the school.
- Teachers do not consistently identify the errors that pupils make in their work. This means that pupils continue to make the same mistakes repeatedly and waste learning time.
- Not all teachers use assessment well enough to identify pupils' next steps in learning. In some cases, pupils of different abilities attempt the same work and, as a result, some are not sufficiently challenged. This also leads to some pupils becoming distracted when the work is either too easy or too hard for them. In some lessons, this leads to pupils relying too heavily on adults to help them with their work.
- Some teachers show pupils new ways of working well. For example, one teacher was observed teaching pupils how to use a blank number line to add two numbers together. She made the process simple to understand and the pupils quickly understood how to use this method. In other mathematics lessons, however, pupils were repeating work that they could already do and were not challenged enough.
- Some teaching is good. In these cases, pupils are engaged because teachers make sure that the work they are given is interesting. Pupils in key stage 1, for example, produced extended pieces of writing that were based on a story that they had been reading. They were eager to complete their work and to share it with adults. Pupils used the resources in the classroom to help them spell words with increasing accuracy.
- Pupils regularly complete homework in line with the school's policy and enjoy the challenge that it provides. The design of homework allows pupils to choose how much time they spend on some of the activities. Some had put a lot of time and effort into completing some of these tasks. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the homework that they get.
- The teaching of early reading skills in the early years and key stage 1 is effective. Pupils recognise letters and know the sounds that different letter combinations make. They are able to break down and put together different sounds to read and write words. They use this in their reading to help them to work out unfamiliar words.
- Older pupils read with fluency and expression and are able to talk about what they have read. In one lesson, pupils extended their understanding and use of vocabulary because the teacher spent time explaining the meaning of unfamiliar words. They used this to help them answer some complicated questions about what they had read.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils are not yet self-confident and self-assured learners. Too often, they rely on the direct assistance of an adult to complete their work. This means that pupils are not

fully engaged with their learning and do not develop the commitment and resilience they need to succeed.

- Pupils play well together during breaktimes and do their best to make sure that other pupils are included in their games. They are respectful and courteous to each other.
- Pupils enjoy making a contribution to the school through their roles as ambassadors, librarians and mini-leaders. They said that they value these roles and feel that they are important. They spoke highly of the fundraising work that they have done to support a charity for homeless people.
- Leaders are quick to identify and tackle low attendance. High levels of absence among a few pupils result in absence being broadly average for most groups of pupils. The school's learning mentor provides bespoke support to families who have difficulties in ensuring that their children attend school. The learning mentor also works with other agencies to ensure that barriers to good attendance are tackled.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and use their manners. They extend a warm welcome to visitors and are eager to tell them about their school.
- In lessons, pupils follow teachers' instructions and do what they are asked to. However, some become easily distracted because the work they are given is not always challenging enough.
- Pupils said that behaviour is good in the school. They informed inspectors that there is occasional poor behaviour in school, but adults always deal with this quickly. The school's records support this view.
- Leaders have detailed information about individual pupils' behaviour but do not routinely analyse this to identify patterns or trends.
- During the autumn term of 2017, exclusions rose significantly in an effort to deal with serious cases of poor behaviour. Leaders acknowledge this rise and are now taking steps to reduce the number of exclusions.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- From their low starting points, pupils make broadly average progress as they move through the year groups. This means that the standards that they reach at the end of key stages 1 and 2 remain low. Pupils are not making fast enough progress to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- With the exception of reading, pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 left with lower standards than those found nationally.
- Pupils made significantly slower progress from their starting points in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2017 than pupils nationally. A new programme for teaching mathematics has been introduced to tackle this but it has not yet been in place for long enough to show improvements in test results.

- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 for the last two years was significantly lower than that found nationally. These pupils made slower progress than other pupils nationally.
- The most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. This means that they do not reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- The work in pupils' books shows that the standards that current pupils reach vary considerably. The assessment information held by the school did not consistently match what inspectors saw in books and lessons.
- Pupils join the early years with lower levels of skill than are typical for their age. They make good progress through the early years but this then slows during key stage 1 and key stage 2. This means that, after the Reception Year, they continue to achieve less well than other pupils nationally.
- The standard reached by pupils in Year 1 in the phonics screening check in 2017 was broadly in line with the national average. This is an improvement from 2016, when attainment was much lower.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Pupils get off to a good start in the early years. School leaders have carried out much improvement work in the early years and this has had a positive impact. The school has been well supported in the early years by the trust.
- Standards on entry are below those typical for this age. During their time in the early years, pupils make good progress. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development rose significantly in 2017 and was much closer to that of all pupils nationally. Since 2015, this figure has doubled.
- The early years environment is bright, engaging and safe. Pupils enjoy being there. They develop positive relationships and behave well. Leaders have made sure that children in the mixed Year 1 and Reception class have equal access to the full early years curriculum and are able to flow freely between different activities and spaces.
- The executive headteacher is the leader of the early years. A new middle leader has been identified for the early years, however, and is receiving good training and support to prepare her for taking on this role. The new leader is already showing a good understanding of strengths and areas for improvement and can describe how actions taken by staff have improved pupils' achievement.
- Leaders' assessments of what children can achieve in the early years are accurate and have been validated by the local authority. Teachers use a wide range of information to make sure that they know what children can do and to make sure that the next steps in learning are planned according to need.
- Parents are making an increased contribution to assessments of what their children can do. The recently introduced electronic system has been welcomed by parents as it allows them to make an increased contribution to the information held by the school.
- Teachers have a good understanding of how children learn in the early years. They make sure that pupils are provided with a wide range of activities and are able to make their own choices, as well as engaging in tasks led by adults.

- Recent improvements in writing are evident. Pupils are beginning to write at length, know who they are writing for and are becoming increasingly accurate when spelling words.
- Safeguarding is effective. Adults have a good understanding of their roles and make sure that records are kept in a timely and thorough way.



## School details

Unique reference number	141824
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10041549

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Nicky Bailey
Headteacher	Sarah Tew (executive headteacher) Ronni Barker (head of school)
Telephone number	0115 972 8469
Website	<a href="http://www.stlaurencecofeprimaryschool.com/">www.stlaurencecofeprimaryschool.com/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@st-laurence.derbyshire.sch.uk">info@st-laurence.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Laurence CofE Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2015. When its predecessor school, also called St Laurence CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- St Laurence is an averaged-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- From 2015 to 2017, the school met the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons, all of which were jointly observed with the executive headteacher and head of school. Inspectors saw the teaching of early reading skills and heard pupils reading. The inspectors talked with pupils about the school and looked at pupils' books while visiting lessons. The team also scrutinised a large sample of pupils' work jointly with the executive headteacher and head of school to gain a view of the impact of teaching over a period of time.
- Inspectors held discussions with the school's senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of The Derby Diocesan Academy Trust.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day and considered 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement, records of checks on the quality of teaching, the most recent information on pupils' attainment and progress and information relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- Inspectors considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

## Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Stylianides

Ofsted Inspector

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