

Inspection of a good school: Saint Lawrence Church of England Primary School

Amery Hill, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2BY

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 February 2022

Outcome

Saint Lawrence Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly, welcoming school. Leaders make sure that the values of love, compassion and respect flow through all aspects of school life. They want the very best for all pupils. Leaders know pupils and their families well. Pupils are very happy and feel safe and valued. Pupils trust adults to help them when they have worries or concerns. As one pupil said, 'Everyone is really supportive here. The teachers are always there to help us with our learning, and they cheer you up if you feel down.'

Pupils behave well and are kind to each other. They play well together at playtimes, enjoying the wide variety of equipment that is available. Bullying is not tolerated. On the rare occasions that bullying happens, pupils are confident that staff will address it promptly.

Pupils learn about how they can contribute positively to local and global communities. For example, pupils collect food for the local food bank and have raised funds to help build toilet facilities for primary schools in Africa. Pupils also enjoy reading with and talking to elderly members of the community in the local library.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), generally achieve well. In some subjects, pupils' achievement is strong. This is because leaders have identified the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. In subjects where achievement is strong, teachers know exactly what to teach. They check pupils' knowledge regularly and plan activities to deepen pupils' understanding.

However, leaders have recognised that they have not identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn in all subjects. This means that teachers do not always focus sharply

on the important knowledge that pupils need to remember. As a result, pupils do not achieve as highly in some subjects because the tasks teachers provide do not deepen pupils' understanding fully. Leaders are currently refining the curriculum so that teachers know exactly what to teach in every subject.

Leaders prioritise reading. Right from the start of Reception, children learn phonics using a well-organised and effective programme. In the early stages of learning to read, pupils read books containing the phonic sounds they know. They quickly become fluent readers. In all year groups, teachers read high-quality books to pupils daily. Pupils love these regular story times.

Leaders identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND well. Parents of pupils with SEND value the advice and support they receive from the school. Pupils with additional needs are supported well to develop their skills across the curriculum.

Leaders have set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. In Reception, children are taught to show high levels of consideration towards their peers and towards other people. When taking part in discussions, pupils listen and respond to each other well. They are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults.

The school's work to support pupils' wider development is a strength. Pupils enjoy a wealth of carefully planned opportunities that enhance the curriculum. They are encouraged to help others by promoting fair trade products. Pupils have regular opportunities to perform in public. Recently, they took part in a dance workshop led by professional dancers. Pupils enjoy a variety of trips, both locally and further afield. They have visited museums in Alton and in London. Pupils also visit places of worship from different faiths, including a mosque, a Hindu temple and a cathedral, in addition to weekly visits to the local church. Pupils can also take part in a variety of extra-curricular clubs, including hockey, drama and orchestra.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders implemented a bespoke well-being programme to support pupils' mental health. The home school link worker provides a listening ear to pupils and parents when needed. Pupils say that they value this opportunity.

Leaders and governors work well together to improve the school. Staff value the support they receive to manage their workload. Leaders make sure that staff prioritise those tasks which have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents are highly positive about the school. They value the family feel. As one parent said, 'St Lawrence is a lovely school. There is a home-from-home feel with much love, compassion and respect between pupils and staff.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance. They have clear systems in place to track and monitor pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders are relentless in ensuring

that pupils get the support they need. Staff have a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do if they have a concern about a child.

Leaders have identified specific local safeguarding concerns. They work with external agencies to educate pupils about these dangers. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn in all subjects. This means that in some subjects the identified content that teachers need to teach is too broad, and teachers do not consistently provide tasks that really deepen pupils' understanding. Leaders need to continue to refine the curriculum, so that pupils can learn detailed knowledge and skills consistently and achieve highly across the whole curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	116267
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10211382
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Susans
Headteacher	Dawn Casson
Website	http://www.st-lawrence.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school.
- The last section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in December 2017.
- The school is a smaller-than-average one-form entry primary school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and nine members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also had a phone call with officers from the local authority and the Diocese of Winchester.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and looked at samples of pupils' work for other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, governing body minutes and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Sue Keeling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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