

# Inspection of a good school: St Lawrence School

Bowl Alley Lane, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 5EJ

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2023

## Outcome

St Lawrence School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff know each pupil extremely well. They are skilled in providing pupils with well-matched, yet challenging, lessons in a broad range of subjects. Pupils gain qualifications in, for example, English, mathematics and other vocational subjects. Pupils are supported effectively to improve their social, emotional and communication skills. They get a good deal here.

The vast majority of pupils behave well and follow sensible routines. Occasional instances of poor behaviour or bullying are dealt with swiftly and fairly. Pupils say that they are happy and feel safe here. They like, and show respect to, the staff.

Pupils benefit greatly from the on-site, outdoor learning centre. Here, pupils learn to understand and care for a variety of animals. These include guinea pigs, chickens, horses, ponies and pigs. Pupils use their mathematical skills to accurately weigh out the animals' feed.

Pupils benefit from a range of educational visits to local places of interest. They improve their self-confidence through working at the community café and interacting in shops. A 'fun club' operates at lunchtime. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests.

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

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum in most subjects. Teachers are clear about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn and when. However, there is some work to do in a small number of other subjects. It is not precisely clear what pupils should learn in these subjects. There is an effective system in place for teachers to check how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum. This system helps teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and plan accurately for their next steps.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are adept at spotting pupils' misconceptions and sensitively correcting them. Pupils take an active role in lessons and contribute well. Staff provide appropriate support and extra resources when required. Low-level disruption is rare. Consequently, pupils work hard, and lessons run smoothly.

Leaders have rightly prioritised the teaching of phonics and early reading. There is a consistent approach in key stages 1 and 2. Staff have received appropriate training. This ensures that pupils' reading books match the sounds they are learning. Accurate assessments mean that pupils who need extra help receive it promptly. A different, age-appropriate system is used for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. Again, this has been introduced effectively. Pupils say that learning to read helps them to understand the curriculum in other subjects. This work is enabling pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils often have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders and staff are well trained and support pupils very well. There are positive links with specialist, outside agencies. These include an educational psychologist and the speech and language, autism and behaviour support teams. Consequently, pupils get the right support at the right time.

Pupils receive an appropriate personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Themes such as self-awareness and healthy lifestyles ensure that pupils have opportunities to discuss relevant topics. They have recently learned about the protected characteristics and how it is important to respect difference. Pupils are taught an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and sex education. They learn about future careers and training. Pupils understand the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. However, pupils do not have a strong enough knowledge and understanding of faiths and cultures that are different from their own.

Leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable in their areas of responsibility. The vast majority of staff say that they are proud to work at the school and that leaders are sensitive to their well-being and workload. They appreciate the training opportunities that are offered.

Governor advocates know the school well. They receive detailed information from leaders. They check this information for themselves. The governor advocates hold leaders fully to account for their actions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about areas such as county lines, drug trafficking, modern slavery and child exploitation. Staff are vigilant for the potential signs of abuse or neglect. Leaders take prompt actions when concerns are raised. There are strong links with outside agencies, such as the early help and 'Prevent' teams. Pupils and their families are receiving extra help when it is required.

Pupils are taught to stay safe in a variety of ways. They know to keep personal information private when online and the dangers of sharing inappropriate images.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have yet to map out the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary they want pupils to learn, and when, in a small number of subjects. Consequently, teachers are not always exactly sure what they should be teaching. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is mapped and sequenced in all subjects so that teachers know precisely what they are teaching and when.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is not as strong as it might be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their talents and interests, nor do some pupils have a strong enough knowledge of faiths and cultures that are different to their own. Leaders should ensure that pupils have increased opportunities to pursue their talents and interests and that the curriculum offers pupils further opportunities to deepen their understanding of faith and cultures that are different to their own.

## **Background**

When we have judged 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

## **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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142308
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269259
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Rhodes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leanda Mason (executive headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lwf.lincs.sch.uk/st-lawrence">www.lwf.lincs.sch.uk/st-lawrence</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There has been considerable change to leadership since the previous inspection.
- All pupils at the school have SEND, as well as social, emotional, mental health and behavioural needs.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans. They attend the school from a variety of different local authorities.
- The school is due to relocate to new, purpose-built premises in September 2023. These premises are on the same site as the existing school.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held various meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, school leaders and other staff. The lead inspector met governor advocates from the Lincolnshire Wolds federation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector scrutinised various curriculum documents in a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from all key stages read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with pupils to understand their views of the school. Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons and social times.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Inspectors checked staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding records were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the questionnaire for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Thornalley

Ofsted Inspector

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