

## INSPECTION REPORT

**St Lawrence CE Primary School**

Church Stretton

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123468

Headteacher: Mr T J Johnston

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 1 – 2 November 2000

Inspection number: 225278

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Shrewsbury Road Church Stretton Shropshire
Postcode:	SY6 6EX
Telephone number:	01694 722682
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr D West
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 254 pupils on roll, 138 boys and 116 girls, taught in nine classes, five of which are mixed-age. At the time of the inspection six of the 14 children in the reception class were less than five years of age. There are 45 pupils on the school's register of special educational need, including one with a full statement. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is above national expectations. Eleven pupils are entitled to free school meals; at 4.3 per cent this is well below the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school with many strong features. The overall quality of teaching is high and the headteacher and staff have created a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere in thoughtfully developed accommodation. The overall effectiveness of the school is good and it provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The overall quality of teaching is high.
- The school is very successful in promoting very good behaviour and attitudes towards school and learning. Staff and pupils work together well to maintain the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. Relationships between them are warm and mutually respectful.
- The work of pupils is valued and celebrated through colourful and stimulating displays in accommodation that has been thoughtfully adapted and is used well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There are very good standards throughout the school in English, mathematics and science.

#### **What could be improved**

- The role and effectiveness of the governing body in shaping the future development of the school and in monitoring progress towards agreed targets.
- The role and effectiveness of the senior management team, particularly with respect to curriculum co-ordination and assessment.
- The role and effectiveness of subject co-ordinators with respect to monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- The use of assessment, particularly in the foundation subjects, to plan the curriculum for subsequent year groups.
- Communication with parents about what their children are learning.
- Clarification and better implementation of procedures for some aspects of the welfare of children.

*What the school is good at outweighs what it needs to improve. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1996. At that time the standards achieved by the pupils, the quality of education provided by the school and its management and efficiency were judged to be good and the school's climate for learning was judged to be very good. However, the last inspection team reported that the balance of the curriculum, the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators and the provision for staff appraisal all needed improving. Since that time there has been satisfactory improvements in most respects. However, most subject co-ordinators still do not have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The vision, enthusiasm and energy of members of the governing body, staff and parent body constitute a good basis for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	B	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	
Science	A	A	A	B	

Schools are described as similar when they fall in the same group with respect to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in this case between 0 and 8 per cent; the present figure in the school is 4.3 per cent. Over the period 1996 to 1999, the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 have fluctuated. In English and science they have declined in relation to the national average for similar schools, in mathematics they have maintained their position.

Inspection evidence suggests that standards in the present Year 6 are well above the national average in English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy) and science. Similarly, standards in the current Year 2 are well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards throughout the school in art are above those expected nationally. This represents a major improvement compared with the position at the time of the last inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent; pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming each day. They work with great interest and enthusiasm in their lessons and at the other activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave very well in lessons and concentrate on their work. Their behaviour around the school is also very good. Pupils are courteous and friendly and make an important contribution to maintaining the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils mature into agreeable confident people with positive attitudes towards each other and to the adults in the school community. Pupils of all ages work and play well together and all are keen to take responsibility and display initiative.
Attendance	Good; attendance is significantly higher than the national average and few pupils are late for school.

Relationships at all levels are a considerable strength of the school. Members of staff have high expectations of work and behaviour and provide a very good example that pupils readily follow.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7 – 11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

All lessons observed were of at least satisfactory standard. In fact around three-quarters of lessons were of at least good quality and 43 per cent were judged to be very good. This is high quality teaching, well above what is typical of schools during inspection. It is the main reason for pupils' very positive attitudes to their learning and for their good learning and progress throughout the school. The teaching of English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, is never less than good; it is often very good.

Particular strengths of the teaching throughout the school include the skill with which teachers use questions to help pupils to confirm what they already know and to extend their learning. Teachers plan their lessons well and go to a lot of trouble to make them interesting. There are good classroom routines based on very good relationships and adults and children work together well. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and pupils respond well to knowing what is expected of them. They take pride in the presentation of their work and learn to concentrate on their work for long periods of time. When they are given the opportunity to work independently or to find things out on their own they rise to the occasion well. All this contributes to making the overall quality of their learning good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school meets National Curriculum requirements and makes particularly good provision for teaching English, mathematics and science and information and communication technology. Planning to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding from year to year in other subjects is not fully developed. The curriculum is enriched by a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, including a residential experience.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; plans to support individual pupils are good and classroom assistants and class teachers work together well to provide help when it is needed. The provision is well organised and administered.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good; provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, that for moral and social development is very good. Provision for cultural development is good overall but insufficient attention is paid to preparing pupils for life in an ethnically and culturally diverse society. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Despite the obvious care and commitment of the headteacher and staff, procedures for child protection and some other aspects of pupils' welfare and guidance are unsatisfactory.

Parents have a very positive view of the school in most respects. A sizeable minority would like more information about what their children are learning and even more are critical of the way the school has handled recent staffing difficulties. However, the school has followed the guidance of the local education authority when dealing with these confidential matters and the lack of reliable information has led to parents misunderstanding what was happening.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is satisfactory overall. However, the senior management team does not have the opportunity to make an effective contribution to the development of the school. Teachers with responsibility for subject areas do not, for the most part, have the opportunity to exercise effective leadership in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Many individual governors are committed to the school and give generously of their time in supporting it. However, the governing body is not making an effective contribution to shaping the future direction of the school nor is it sufficiently active in holding the school to account for its progress towards agreed targets.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school effectively monitors its progress towards improving results in national tests and in improving conditions and facilities for teaching and learning. It is less effective in other areas, for example, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and in progress with respect to some of those areas identified in the last inspection report.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school manages its budget well. There is good use of specific grants, well targeted towards improving provision, for example, in terms of special educational needs or computer facilities. The school actively seeks to get the best value for money in its decision-making.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 74 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 17 who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector have been taken into account

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Their children like school and make good progress. Behaviour is good and the right amount of homework is set.</p> <p>Teaching is good and the school has high expectations.</p> <p>The school is approachable.</p> <p>The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</p>	<p>The information they receive about their children's progress.</p> <p>The degree to which the school works closely with parents.</p> <p>The leadership and management of the school.</p> <p>The range of extra-curricular activities offered.</p>

The inspection team fully supports the positive views of parents. The provision for extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and the arts, before and after school, is very good. The school does provide sufficient information and opportunities for consultation for parents to be aware of the children's progress. The inspection team agrees that there would be benefit in parents having more and fuller information about what their children are going to learn each term. The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and the governing body are effective but there is room for further improvement.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

#### The overall quality of teaching is high.

1. Of the lessons observed 43 per cent were judged to be very good, a further 31 per cent were good, 26 per cent were satisfactory and none were unsatisfactory. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection. The high quality of teaching is the main reason for pupils' excellent attitudes towards school and their interest and involvement in all that the school offers. Parents regard the standard of teaching as good and pupils quote *the way that teachers help you to understand* as one of the aspects that they like about the school.
2. Examples of very good teaching were observed in both key stages; 55 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 1 and 33 per cent in Key Stage 2 fell into this category. In more than three-quarters of lessons pupils made progress that was good or very good. The good quality of pupils' learning and their good behaviour and response to their work is due to the high proportion of teaching which is at least good.
3. The teaching of the literacy hour is never less than good in either key stage. In mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, the teaching is also never less than good; 60 per cent of lessons were very good. This very good standard of teaching throughout the school makes a major contribution to the pupils' very good achievements in national tests. It also stimulates pupils' love of learning and their confidence in approaching new work.
4. Teachers all plan their lessons conscientiously, seeking to make the work interesting and accessible to the pupils. In the vast majority of lessons observed, teachers had defined precisely what they intended the pupils to learn and made this clear to them. In the best practice seen, the targets were written on the board and discussed with the class. In at least one case, older pupils noted the targets in their books. In a few cases, the teacher referred back to the targets during the course of the lesson.
5. In a geography lesson with a class of pupils from Years 5 and 6, for example, the learning objectives to do with tourism and the distribution of mountain areas were clear. The pupils had been helped to prepare for this lesson and others through the teacher writing the day's timetable and the targets for each lesson on the board before the start of the school day. This practice helps pupils to become more involved in their learning and to take more responsibility for organising themselves. The teacher used a video of a group of pupils from the school on a mountain walk well to stimulate interest and discussion. This contributed to effective learning. In this lesson, the final part was used well to pull together what had been done and this enhanced the quality of pupils' learning.
6. Where even the best teaching could often be further improved is in using the final part of lessons to check with the pupils to what extent the targets have been achieved. The otherwise good lesson planning sheet, which teachers used during the inspection, does not include a focus on assessment of this sort.
7. Another strong feature of much of the good and better teaching seen was the good use of questions to help pupils to revise and consolidate what they had learned previously and then to extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a science lesson with pupils from Years 1 and 2 the teacher questioned the class very effectively to help them to revise what they already knew about what happened when

foods were cooled in the refrigerator. She then led them, through further questions, to explore the changes that occur when ingredients are combined and heated, cooked! This lesson was very effective in promoting a spirit of enquiry in pupils and a good understanding of what a scientific approach involves.

8. Teachers throughout the school have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and of their behaviour and this promotes good learning. In a mathematics lesson with pupils from Years 4 and 5, for example, pupils were expected to calculate 1 per cent of 5900 and 10 per cent of 360 in their heads. Later in the lesson pupils were challenged well when they had to extend their learning about co-ordinates beyond the first quadrant.
9. There are well-established classroom routines, pupils know what is expected of them and respond positively. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 in a mixed-age class know that they are encouraged and expected to be independent and to promote their own learning. Examples were noted of pupils leaving their work to go to the place in the classroom where they could find out a spelling or to the large number square to check which number was two on from 36. There were other equally positive examples, for example, when pupils from Years 5 and 6 conducted their own research into religious worship. There could, however, be more consistent encouragement of this independence throughout the school.
10. Teachers recognise the need, particularly in mixed-age classes, to make sure that work is well matched to the learning needs of different groups within the class. There were good examples of work being set at different levels, including more challenge for potentially higher attaining pupils and more support for those who found the work more difficult. This was very well demonstrated in a science lesson with a Year 3 class when pupils were planning an investigation on thermal insulation. The teacher was very careful, and skilled, in phrasing questions and directing them at pupils of different abilities. She also went to a lot of trouble to prepare worksheets at different levels and to stick them in pupils' books before the lesson. In the two classes where this practice was observed, teachers were positively countering the notion of any fixed *higher* or *lower* groups while still matching work to needs very carefully. Occasionally, as for example in a very good art lesson with pupils from Years 1 and 2, all pupils were set the same task and given the individual support that they needed to achieve success. The school recognises the need to identify and use more of the ways in which individual learning needs can be met while at the same time avoiding labelling. The best and varied practice in the school needs to be shared. Pupils with special educational needs are often supported well by the team of classroom assistants and volunteers. See paragraphs 24 – 26 for more details of this good aspect of the school's provision.
11. A further feature of some of the best teaching observed was the way in which teachers helped pupils to see the relevance of what they were learning and how work in different subjects or lessons was connected. For example, the quality of the learning of pupils from Years 5 and 6 was greatly enhanced when their teacher encouraged them through skilful questioning to recognise the connections between their work on Nelson Mandela as a person who changed the course of history and their work on rights and responsibilities in the context of their own personal and social development.
12. There were many good examples of the way in which teachers used language to help pupils to learn and how pupils' literacy skills were developed through their work in other subject areas. In a very good lesson with a Year 1 class, for example, the teacher used her flipchart very well to record and group the key words from pupils'

descriptions of materials. Very good questioning and the teacher's own correct use of language enabled pupils to become confident with the use, for example, of *predict*.

13. The quality of the best marking of pupils' work is very high. In classes in Key Stage 1, for example, marking shows high expectations in terms of presentation and is regularly used to show pupils what they should do to improve further. There are examples throughout the school of marking of this developmental sort but not enough use is made of marking as a means of giving pupils more control over their own learning. Homework, on the other hand, is consistently used well to support and extend learning.

**The school is very successful in promoting very good behaviour and attitudes towards school and learning. Staff and pupils work together well to maintain the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. Relationships between them are warm and mutually respectful.**

14. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' standards of work and behaviour and make these clear. Pupils say that they know where they are. Teachers use praise well in rewarding good work and behaviour. Because lessons are almost invariably interesting and teachers exercise firm, good-humoured supervision there is very little incentive or opportunity for misbehaviour. Pupils themselves report that they feel relaxed in their classrooms and that this helps them to produce good work. They appreciate that their teachers are friendly and make learning fun.
15. Pupils throw themselves wholeheartedly into their work and are eager to answer questions or contribute to discussions. These positive attitudes are due in large measure to the skill of their teachers in providing interesting work at the right level to challenge pupils and to stimulate further learning.
16. The school actively promotes responsibility by giving all pupils an opportunity to exercise it. As one pupil put it, "everyone has a job for a term" – these jobs are selected from a list and pupils clearly take their responsibilities seriously. Older pupils are given the opportunity to contribute to the review of the school's provision for personal and social education and this in itself provides a further opportunity for developing the sense of community.
17. Pupils and teachers work together effectively in agreeing improvement targets that are later shared with parents. This highly commendable practice further supports the school's efforts to help pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning. The recent improvement in computer facilities provides a valuable further opportunity for developing independent learning.
18. The school's promotion of pupils' social and moral development is very good. The wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities and the residential experience for pupils in Year 6 are an important part of this promotion and also help to establish and maintain the very good relationships that are a strong feature of the school.
19. The adults in the school community, led by the headteacher, treat each other and the pupils with respect. This very good example has a powerful and continuing influence on the pupils from the time that they start school. In the reception class, for example, the teacher exercises very effective management of the children through humour and her knowledge of individual needs. In response, the children are involved and happy, their behaviour lively but controlled and they are eager to contribute comments and observations in their English lesson. At the top of the school, the pupils who are discussing their personal and social development and relating the issues of rights

and responsibilities to their studies of Nelson Mandela are being very effectively encouraged to develop good reflective attitudes and to be aware of bias. Parents recognise that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible and the inspection team fully endorses this view.

20. Assemblies are also used to promote reflection and awareness of others. For example, an assembly for pupils in Key Stage 1 focused on celebrations, especially birthdays. As well as playing music by a composer from Eastern Europe, the teacher told a story about a Chinese orphan who did not know when her birthday was. This encouraged empathy and also promoted awareness of other cultures. This very good example rather points up the fact that the school does not as a whole use art, music, literature and dance as effectively as it should to help pupils to learn about and understand other cultures.

**The work of pupils is valued and celebrated through colourful and stimulating displays in accommodation that has been adapted well and is used well.**

21. The school's accommodation, alongside good staffing and learning resources, makes a distinctive contribution to the quality of education provided and, ultimately, to the achievement of high standards of work and behaviour. The building has been thoughtfully adapted and extended over a number of years. In particular, what was a separate classroom has been integrated into the main building, provision for a computer suite has been created and another classroom provided for the youngest children. These adaptations have led to an obvious improvement in the school's facilities. Less obvious, but also very important, are improvements in the storage facilities in and around classrooms, which mean that classrooms are not cluttered, pupils have somewhere to put their coats and resources are stored well and are accessible. These improvements also have a positive impact on the quality of education. The recent provision of better working spaces for the headteacher, secretary and staff are also well designed to improve efficiency and provide more comfortable meeting spaces.
22. The walls of classrooms and corridors are made colourful and stimulating through well-mounted displays of pupils' work and many photographs of pupils engaged in a variety of activities. These displays are a deliberate celebration of pupils' work and a valuing of their achievements across a wide spectrum of activities, including sport, outdoor activities and the arts. The school has been very successful in improving the standard of pupils' work in art since the last inspection and there are several high quality displays which show examples of the work of, for example, Paul Klee and the pupils' own work in response to this stimulus.
23. The way that the accommodation has been developed and is used, and the celebration of pupils' achievements and the stimulation of further work through display, are vital elements in maintaining the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere that has been created.

**The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.**

24. The organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is carried out very effectively by the relatively new co-ordinator. Identification and review procedures are carried out thoroughly and parents are fully involved. The co-ordinator works with class teachers after school or at lunch-times to produce individual education plans. These are mainly language based and are of good quality, containing specific achievable targets and the action and support that will be necessary if they are to be achieved.

25. Support in classrooms is provided mainly by the strong team of classroom assistants who work with individuals or groups of pupils. There is good teamwork between teachers and support assistants and the pupils with special educational needs benefit from this and are enabled to have full access to the work that other pupils are doing.
26. The school is also aware of the need to identify carefully talent and ability across the curriculum and this important area for development in the school is currently being well led and pursued.

**There are very good standards throughout the school in English, mathematics and science.**

27. On the evidence of the lessons observed, examination of the work of a sample of pupils from across the school, discussion with pupils and consideration of national test results, it is judged that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are well above the national average.
28. Children enter the school in the term in which they reach five years of age. Most of them have benefited from pre-school provision and they are confident, good at communication and have already developed some basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Provision for them in the reception class is good and they make good progress so that they are quickly ready to move on to the National Curriculum programmes of study.
29. **Throughout Key Stage 1**, pupils make good progress in all aspects of **literacy**, not only in English lessons but also in other subjects. For example, in a very good art lesson, pupils from Years 1 and 2 used the language of pattern, form, colour, shape and space well when they were talking about their own work in response to that of Clarice Cliff. The teacher lost no opportunity to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills through this activity. The same teacher also used work on combining and heating materials in science to extend pupils' observational and descriptive skills. She and the other adults supporting the work used flipcharts well so that pupils saw the words written down. Standards in speaking and listening at the end of the key stage are well above average.
30. Pupils in another Years 1 and 2 class benefited from a very good lesson in which they learned to write in the form of a set of safety rules in the context of a bonfire night poster. The quality of pupils' learning and the progress that they made were good as a result of the teacher's clear explanations and good circulating round the room to support and challenge individuals. Pupils at the end of the key stage write neatly, in full sentences and with correct spelling. Teachers use individual word boards effectively to give pupils practice in writing and spelling and also to assess pupils' progress. Pupils are also given many opportunities to read and most read well and with evident enjoyment. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and also make good progress.
31. **In mathematics in Key Stage 1**, including the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils make good progress and achieve well above average levels of attainment. A particular strength of the teaching and of the pupils' learning is the consistently accurate use of mathematical language. For example, pupils in Year 1 are very exact when they say, for example, *6 is between 2 and 17* or *17 is the biggest*. The teacher very effectively promotes good learning and progress through her choice of activities and very good questioning skills. The work set for different pupils is very well matched to their learning needs and this also helps to promote confidence and

learning. Pupils throughout the key stage count confidently and accurately and clearly regard numbers as their friends. They are familiar with odd and even numbers and higher attaining pupils benefit from the challenge of investigating whether adding three odd numbers will always result in another odd number. Evidence from exercise books shows that all appropriate aspects of the mathematics curriculum are being taught and that pupils are achieving well above average standards throughout.

32. **Science** is taught well in **Key Stage 1** and pupils respond with evident enjoyment. They are developing a very good basis of scientific knowledge and a very good understanding of the scientific method. Teachers are particularly strong in using language to enable pupils to develop scientific concepts. The area of enquiry during the inspection was materials and change. In both of the very good lessons observed, planning and preparation were meticulous and the work was pitched at a level that all pupils could access. Support and challenge for the groups of different age and ability were provided in a variety of ways, including extra adult or teacher support, more direct questioning or different worksheets. In their response to the lesson pupils showed that they have developed good observational and descriptive skills. When required to take part in the practical work they behaved sensibly and were thoroughly absorbed and interested in what they were doing. Examination of exercise books shows that there is very thorough coverage of all aspects of the programmes of study and that pupils are making good, sometimes very good, progress. Because of the good planning and teaching, including the opportunities for investigative work, the overall quality of pupils' learning is good.
33. **In Key Stage 2**, the good foundations established in earlier years are built on very effectively, pupils continue to make good progress and the quality of their learning is good. In particular, pupils demonstrate that they can concentrate on their work for extended periods of time and that, when given the opportunity, they can carry out independent research using both print and electronic information sources.
34. In **English** at the end of the key stage, pupils work hard and with a good measure of success when grappling with the idea and use of personification in their poems. They show a good level of understanding of the way in which literary conventions, for example the use of sentences and punctuation, can be disappplied in their poems. Their exercise books show good coverage and progress in their knowledge and understanding of language work. Pupils use sophisticated vocabulary, for example *deja-vu* and *emotion*, correctly in both oral and written work. Spelling is good. Pupils demonstrate a high level of confidence when they explain clearly and succinctly to visiting inspectors what the lesson is about. Their attainment in speaking is well above average. They use a wide and mature vocabulary in their debate on the issue of fox-hunting, for example *unbiased*, *prejudiced*, *sabotage*, *century*, and compile arguments well. Pupils' learning and progress throughout the key stage are good as a result of good and often imaginative teaching based on a deep understanding of how to develop both literacy skills and a love of literature, discussion and debate.
35. **Throughout Key Stage 2, the mathematics** taught continues to cover well all aspects of the curriculum, including the National Numeracy Strategy. Number work is particularly strong although few examples were observed of pupils using their number, or other mathematical skills, in other subjects. Pupils in the Year 3 class, in a very well taught lesson, demonstrated a good level of competence in extending number sequences in response to the teacher's progressive challenges. She maintained pace and interest through a good and varied range of activities and pupils successfully recognised multiples of 5 and 10, counted on from 23 in 10s and correctly continued the 110, 210, 310 sequence. A particularly strong feature of this

lesson, and one that promoted good learning and progress for everybody, was the provision of tasks set at four different levels, each with an extension activity. The teacher made very clear her expectation that pupils would all get on to the extension work and this duly happened.

36. At the end of the key stage, the oldest pupils benefited from another very well planned and presented lesson, this time on probability. In response to questions at the beginning of the lesson, most pupils correctly gave the probability of throwing an even number or a number other than 5 on a die. Individual pupils showed that they could express probabilities in fractions, decimals or percentages. The teacher is very skilled at using questions to lead pupils on and takes great care to ensure that pupils understand. They respond well and quickly recognised that there is more than one way of throwing a total of 7 with two dice. They were keen to list the 36 possible outcomes for homework. Attainment at the end of the key stage, across the mathematics curriculum, is well above average and pupils have developed very positive attitudes to the subject.
37. **In science in Key Stage 2**, pupils continue to broaden and deepen their knowledge, understanding and investigational skills. The science curriculum in the school has been planned well to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes and overall progress and the quality of learning are good for pupils of all abilities. The pupils in the Year 3 class who were planning an investigation into thermal insulators approached the task in a way that showed a very good understanding of the scientific method and the requirements of a fair test. The teacher had established very good working relationships and routines and pupils of all levels of ability confidently tackled the task. Extra challenge was appropriately directed at the higher attaining pupils who were required to predict outcomes and say why they thought that a given material might be a better thermal insulator. Pupils in Year 4 have a sound basic knowledge of electricity and their learning was extended well in terms of appliances generating heat, light and sound, working from batteries or the mains, and safety considerations. A good feature of their lesson was the opportunity for pupils to work independently within a group and this promoted a good sharing and consolidation of knowledge.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Leadership and management**

38. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and financial management is good. The governing body has been careful to seek the best value for money in some areas of its responsibilities, for example in relation to the recent improvements to the building. Specific targeted grants, for example for special educational needs, are appropriately used. Individual governors are committed to the school and supportive of it and the chair of the governing body is a frequent and welcome visitor. In respect of many of its responsibilities, including those that are statutory, the governing body works effectively through its well-developed committee structure.
39. Deficiencies in procedures relating to support, guidance and welfare should, however, have been identified and remedied before now. Dissatisfaction with the way that the school has dealt with problems in this area largely explains the unusually low proportion, 63 per cent, of the parents who returned completed questionnaires expressing satisfaction with the way that the school is led and managed. However, in meticulously following the advice of the local education authority on matters of communication, the school left parents thinking that nothing was being done whereas in actual fact the procedures for dealing with complaints was being very conscientiously followed.
40. The headteacher has successfully created, and maintains, the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere that characterises the school. Through his imagination and perseverance he has brought to fruition many improvements to the accommodation and physical provision. These contribute in no small way to the quality of learning and range of achievements of the pupils. The harmonious and committed staff offer a wide range of experience and expertise both in lessons and through the very good provision for extra-curricular activities.

**There are three aspects of the overall leadership and management of the school that need improvement:**

**The role and effectiveness of the governing body in shaping the future development of the school and in monitoring progress towards agreed targets.**

41. The governing body has not effectively held the school to account for its progress towards the key issues identified in the last inspection report. In particular, there has been insufficient progress in the development of the role of the subject co-ordinators with respect to monitoring teaching and learning. The school has been effective in reacting to national initiatives in the fields of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. However, the governing body has not discussed, decided and shared its vision for the future development of the school. The current formulation of the school aim as published in the brochure is appropriate for any school; there is nothing that gives the distinctive flavour of what is different about St Lawrence Primary and where it is going.
42. Although financial management is good, there is little evidence that governors explore how the expenditure of a given sum of money could best improve standards of achievement. Some elements of the development plan are entered as having no cost. This can hardly be the case because if a portion of someone's time is being spent on Activity A then it is not being spent on Activity B. Which of A or B has been judged to make the greater contribution towards raising standards and improving the quality of education provided?

43. Governors have agreed to link up with individual subject co-ordinators in order to inform themselves about work in particular areas and to improve the discharge of their monitoring role. There is little evidence that this has happened to any great extent.

**The role and effectiveness of the senior management team, particularly with respect to curriculum co-ordination and assessment.**

44. Individual members of the team have appropriate job descriptions, but the team as a whole does not have a clearly defined role and responsibility for improving curriculum co-ordination and coherence. The deputy headteacher does not have non-contact time to monitor or to release other teachers to do so. Neither does the special educational needs co-ordinator who, although not a member of the senior management team, clearly has a whole-school role and responsibility that she can only fully discharge by getting into other classrooms.
45. The school had not got as far as it should have with developing whole-school schemes of work that showed clearly what pupils were supposed to learn in each year group and build on subsequently. The inspection team recognises that the introduction of other national initiatives diverted the school's attention from dealing fully with this key issue from the last inspection. The last inspection report recorded that the school was aware of its weakness with respect to assessment and recording in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and had plans to develop suitable systems. The need to do so still remains.

**The role and effectiveness of subject co-ordinators with respect to monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.**

46. Subject co-ordinators are, to a person, enthusiastic and suitably qualified to provide effective leadership in their areas of responsibility. However, monitoring of the standards and quality of education in other classrooms, which was the thrust of the key issue identified at the last inspection, has not happened to any significant extent. It is clearly recognised by most co-ordinators that the effective adoption of new government guidelines, improvements in whole-school planning and assessment and the sharing of the existing good practice necessitate a rolling programme of monitoring and being monitored. The senior management team has a key role in making this happen.

**The use of assessment, particularly in the foundation subjects, to plan the curriculum for subsequent year groups.**

47. Teacher's lesson planning, as noted above, paragraph 4, is good with clearly defined learning objectives. Where there is room for further improvement is in planning to make assessments of the extent to which these objectives have been achieved by the end of the lesson. This is sometimes done well in the concluding part of the lesson and teachers use the information gained to plan their next lesson. What is not happening in most cases is that any record is being kept of those pupils who exceeded the target and those who fell short of it. This means that teachers do not retain the information that they would find useful when teaching these pupils subsequently or when teaching the same area of work to a new year group. The school recognises that there is more work to do in consistently implementing simple, manageable and useful systems for making and recording assessments.

**Communication with parents about what their children are learning.**

48. In most respects, parents have a very positive view of the school. However, more than a quarter of those who returned a questionnaire and/or attended the meeting of parents that was held before the inspection had linked reservations. These related to the degree to which the school worked closely with them and the degree to which they were kept informed about their children's progress. In the view of the inspection team, the school provides sufficient opportunities for parent-teacher consultations about children's progress. However, it is evident that not all parents are clear about the yearly programme and the type and purpose of each term's meeting.
49. On the question of communication about what their children are to learn in the coming half-term, the inspection team agrees with those parents who want to know more so that they are in a better position to help. The recent newsletter is a step in the right direction and even more so are initiatives by individual teachers in relation to their own class. The school is rightly in the business of encouraging parents to be involved in their children's education and recognises the need to improve this aspect of its communication with them.

**The establishment and maintenance of agreed procedures for aspects of the welfare of children.**

50. Despite the obvious care and commitment of the headteacher and staff, procedures for child protection and some aspects of pupils' welfare and guidance are unsatisfactory.

**Attendance**

51. Registers are kept in the classrooms all day. This is not satisfactory as in the event of fire or other emergency, particularly outside lesson time, registers would have to be retrieved from nine locations. Computerised attendance records are only updated once a month and this may be too late to achieve prompt explanations for hitherto unexplained absences. The system whereby parents are asked to notify the school as soon as an absence occurs is honoured as much in the breach as in the observance.

**Child protection**

52. The headteacher is the designated person. Nobody else on the staff is fully trained so during the headteacher's absence through illness or on a residential trip the school is not properly covered in this respect. Staff have had informal, internal training and the school recognises the need to review procedures and provide appropriate training.

**Other aspects of support, guidance and welfare are satisfactory.**

53. There is satisfactory provision for first aid, health and safety issues are identified and dealt with and the school has been made secure.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

54. **In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school and to raise further the levels of achievement of the pupils, the following matters should be dealt with:**

**clearly defining the role and effectiveness of the governing body in shaping the future development of the school and in monitoring progress towards agreed targets by:**

- the governing body, with the headteacher and staff, reviewing the aims of the school and establishing clear priorities for development in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- agreeing clear targets and timescales for their achievement;
- establishing simple, understood and agreed ways in which the governing body keeps track of the school's progress towards the agreed targets;  
(see paragraphs 6, 39, 41-43)

**clearly defining the role of the senior management team, particularly with respect to curriculum co-ordination and assessment, and improving its effectiveness by:**

- the headteacher, with the senior management team and the governing body, clearly defining the role of the senior management team with respect to improving progression in pupils' learning in the foundation subjects;
- making the time available for members of the senior management team to undertake or facilitate the monitoring of teaching and learning that is necessary;  
(see paragraphs 44-45)

**improving the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators with respect to monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility by:**

- arranging for appropriate training in lesson observation to be provided;
- making the time available for the monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators to take place;
- requiring subject co-ordinators to lead the discussions on how government guidelines in their area can best be incorporated into the school's planning;  
(see paragraphs 41, 46)

**improving the use of assessment, particularly in the foundation subjects, in planning the curriculum for subsequent year groups by:**

- adopting a lesson-planning format which explicitly links assessment with clearly defined learning objectives;
- devising simple, useful and manageable procedures for recording, retrieving and using the assessment information thus gained;  
(see paragraphs 10, 47)

**improving communication with parents about what their children are learning by:**

- expanding the information provided in the recently introduced newsletter so that parents know what their child's teacher has planned for the next term or half-term;
- increasing the number of opportunities for parents to learn about how the subjects of the National curriculum are taught;  
(see paragraphs 48-49)

**reviewing and improving procedures for aspects of the welfare of children by:**

- improving the present systems for access to registers during the school day;
- reminding parents to notify the school when children are absent;
- ensuring that a member of staff who is fully trained in child protection procedures is available, as far as possible, at all times;
- requiring all members of staff to receive approved and up-to-date training in child protection procedures;
- making sure that all members of staff understand the implications of their duty of care to the children in the school.

(see paragraphs 39, 50-52)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

23

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	43	31	26	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	254
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	11
<b>Special educational needs</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	30	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (93)	97 (98)	97 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	88 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	32	31	33
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (98)	94 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	22	23	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	17	21	21
	Girls	20	18	19
	Total	37	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (85)	87 (85)	89 (95)
	National	74 (70)	73 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	36	37	36
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	80 (85)	82 (85)	80 (95)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	236
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.8
Average class size	28.2

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	430,454
Total expenditure	439,634
Expenditure per pupil	1,571
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,030
Balance carried forward to next year	11,850

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 29%

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	74

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	38	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	47	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	47	8	3	0
The teaching is good.	59	38	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	36	28	8	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	40	5	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	24	46	18	4	8
The school is well led and managed.	34	29	25	10	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	51	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	41	9	4	4

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents were very positive about the range and quality of the extra-curricular activities provided by the staff and the opportunity for team games, particularly after the annual national testing programme is completed.