



# St Laurence's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110845  
**LEA** CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 278532  
**Inspection dates** 26 January 2006 to 27 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Colin Henderson LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Arbury Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		CB4 2JX
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 712227
<b>Number on roll</b>	218	<b>Fax number</b>	01223 712227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. James Connolly
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 July 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Jan Southgate

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 26 January 2006 - 27 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278532
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average sized primary school that serves the Catholic communities of northern Cambridge and surrounding villages. Ten per cent of its pupils are from other denominations. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, with many coming from a large estate of social housing. Most children start school with below average skills and knowledge. An average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with additional learning needs is just above average. Most pupils are of white British heritage. There are nine pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school that serves its community well and gives good value for money. It is valued highly by parents and pupils. Pupils' achievement is good and, by the time they leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Children make a very good start in the Reception class because of the very effective teaching and good curriculum. This is built on satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, although progress is not consistent as teachers' expectations are not always high enough. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well, especially in Year 6, where high quality teaching and enthusiastic attitudes help them to make very good progress. Gifted and talented pupils do not always achieve as well as they could as activities do not meet their particular learning needs. Key factors in the school's success are its caring Catholic ethos, its good partnership with parents and the enthusiastic and influential leadership of the headteacher. Children are valued and receive good care and support. Most pupils are happy in school, they behave exceptionally well and are keen to succeed. Many recent initiatives have stimulated their desire to learn and raised standards. Effective procedures track and evaluate pupils' achievement carefully, although the use of targets to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is not sufficiently developed. The school knows how well it is doing, which matches the judgements of the inspectors. It plans in detail for its continuing development. It has successfully tackled the issues from its last inspection, and is well placed to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Extend good practice to ensure that teaching is consistently good. - Use marking and learning targets to ensure that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work. - Meet the learning needs of gifted and talented pupils more effectively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Very good teaching in the Reception class ensures that children make very good progress. Most attain expected standards by the start of Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 and 2 although teachers' expectations are not always high enough. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 as a result of consistently good teaching, especially for the oldest pupils. This helps them to achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils who find learning hard are supported well and make good progress. Good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language helps them to achieve well. Gifted and talented pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should as learning activities do not always extend their special skills. The results of Year 2 national tests have been lower in the last two years as the school has received an increased number of pupils with learning difficulties and weak English language skills. Recent initiatives, for example, to improve pupils' writing, are halting this decline. Although the 2005 test results for Year 6 were lower than the well above average

levels attained in previous years, school records showed that these pupils made good progress in relation to their abilities. They achieved the realistic targets set for them. The current Year 6 has a high proportion of more able pupils, who are likely to achieve their challenging targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted very successfully within a caring Catholic ethos that is reflected clearly in every aspect of school life. Relationships are very good as pupils are effectively taught to value and respect each other. Their enjoyment of school is shown well in positive approaches to learning and excellent behaviour. The school has improved the inconsistent attendance of a small number of pupils, and attendance is now satisfactory overall. Older pupils take on responsibilities willingly, for example, by acting as 'buddies' to the Reception children. Pupils have a good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles and are involved in a good range of sports. The school council gives them an effective voice in helping to improve the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school makes very good use of assemblies, prayers and class discussions to encourage pupils to reflect upon their feelings. Contributions to the school and wider communities are good. The links with Cambridge University, local schools and nearby colleges extend pupils' basic skills, as well as their economic awareness and cultural development, for example, by linking with schools in Africa.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching has improved well since the last inspection and is now good. It is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 and contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and say that they make learning fun. They use resources, including interactive white boards, successfully to enhance learning. Teaching assistants provide strong support during lessons and the teaching of key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is good. Provision for pupils who find learning difficult is also good, although pupils with particular gifts and talents do not always have enough opportunities to extend their skills. Revised procedures for the assessment of pupils' work have improved the rigour with which teachers monitor the progress of each individual. Some of the marking is very thorough but teachers do not always show clearly how pupils can raise the standard of their work. Pupils know the National Curriculum level at which they are working but would like more specific guidance regarding what they actually have to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good throughout the school. Children in the Reception class make strong progress because the learning activities closely match their needs and interests. Adults strike a successful balance between allowing children to choose activities for themselves and providing good, low key guidance. The curriculum is varied to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and they make good progress. The limited opportunities for pupils who have particular gifts and talents restrict the challenge they experience. Pupils enjoy participating in the many additional activities that take place during lunchtime and after-school. They successfully develop their sporting, musical and artistic talents and levels of participation are high. These opportunities are also very effective in encouraging pupils to use their initiative and become more self-confident. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They also have the opportunity to acquire basic French, German and Spanish. Older pupils also take part in a residential trip to an outdoor activity centre. They have the opportunity to live together and work as a team and this prepares them well for future life and the world of work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school regards the welfare of pupils as a high priority and members of staff work hard to meet pupils' needs. Rigorous procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid ensure that pupils are safe and very well looked after. Pupils with learning difficulties receive strong support and links with appropriate external agencies are close. As a result of this high standard of care, pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and make good progress. Induction procedures for children entering the Reception class are very good. Members of staff visit local nursery and pre-school groups, and children and their parents can spend several lessons with the Reception class and attend a 'Teddy Bear's Picnic'. These opportunities ensure everyone gets to know one another and help incoming children to settle quickly. Teachers monitor pupils' academic development closely and pupils know what level they are achieving. Teachers, however, do not always guide pupils enough on what they have to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The enthusiastic and purposeful approach of the headteacher, supported very well by her energetic deputy, is a key element in providing good leadership and management. It is valued highly by pupils and parents, as shown in such comments as 'she confidently and cheerfully manages the school, what an asset!' In their first year in post, the headteacher and deputy have worked together very well, supported by an effective staff team and good governing body. They have quickly gained a clear understanding of how well the school is doing. Recent initiatives in assertive discipline have helped to raise standards. The school's mission statement and the headteacher's drive and

commitment provide a strong direction for the work of the school. The effective self-evaluation procedures are used well to check the school's provision and outcomes, in consultation with its stakeholders. The roles of governors and subject leaders have improved since the last inspection. They are now effectively involved in monitoring standards, although their evaluation of pupils' achievement is not always rigorous enough. New tracking procedures have been introduced to monitor pupils' progress and evaluate teaching and learning, and parents' and pupils' views are used well to inform a detailed school improvement plan. These changes are linked successfully to staff training and professional development, and help to provide a cohesive and consistent approach to improving provision. The school benefits from good accommodation, and plans to use its large carry forward in funds to improve it further. The effective leadership, together with a strong team of staff and governors and parental support, puts the school in a good position to continue to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly and making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. What we thought was best about your school: - You get on well together and are kind to each other, both in lessons and in the playground. - Your teachers and other adults care about you as individuals, make sure that you are safe and listen to your opinions about school. - You behave exceptionally well and listen carefully. This means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. - All the adults put a lot of effort into helping you do well and try to make your lessons interesting. You enjoy your work and try hard to do what your teachers ask. We think you learn well. - The headteacher, the teachers and the governors who run your school are doing a good job and they want to make your school even better. - Your parents think it is a good school, and we agree. What we have asked the school to do now: - Help you to know and understand what you need to do to improve your work. - Teachers to look carefully at each others' teaching to see if they can help you to achieve even better. - Those of you with particular gifts and talents are given more opportunities to extend your skills. We hope that you continue to be happy at school and learn well.