

St Luke's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102604
Local Authority	Kingston Upon Thames
Inspection number	286439
Inspection date	13 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr N Craddock
Headteacher	Mrs P Allan
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2003
School address	Acre Road Kingston Upon Thames KT2 6EN
Telephone number	020 8546 0902
Fax number	020 8974 8997

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Luke's is the only Foundation school in Kingston. The majority of pupils come from the local area and the majority come from advantaged social and economic backgrounds. A well below average proportion have learning difficulties and disabilities. Children's attainment on entry is above average. The school has several awards, amongst them Investors in People, a national award for information and communication technology, and the Healthy Schools Award. During the inspection week, a further award - the London Schools Environment Award - was achieved.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Luke's is an outstanding school where pupils flourish, both academically and in their personal and social development. There are many outstanding features but one thing that comes shining through is the consistency of the high quality provision. There are no years when the quality dips. Many pupils spoke highly of their school during the inspection. They could not fault it. They enjoy coming and are very enthusiastic about all the rich, varied opportunities they have, including trips, visitors, school clubs, special events and performances. Parents are also extremely happy with the school's work. Several praised the happy, secure family 'feel' that is evident from the moment you walk into the school. One parent's comment was similar to many, 'It encourages a sense of team spirit but does not lose sight of the individual.'

Pupils and parents are right to be proud of St Luke's. Teaching and learning are excellent and this means that pupils build extremely well upon their starting points. Achievement is outstanding and, by the time pupils leave the school, standards are exceptionally high. Children in Nursery and Reception get an excellent start to their education as a result of the outstanding provision. Alongside pupils' academic progress, the school is also excellent at nurturing their personal and social skills. There are high levels of care and support and pupils feel safe and happy. The Christian ethos and clear emphasis on valuing and respecting each individual has an impact upon the pupils themselves. The result is pupils who are delightful to meet, who respect one another, readily get involved in everything the school has to offer and, above all, develop a love of learning.

Leadership is outstanding. Although there have been some changes in the senior leadership team, the school's many strengths are so well embedded that the quality of provision has not faltered in any way. There is certainly no sign of complacency. On the contrary, aspects are being refined and improved further. There is a keen and shared commitment to school improvement and this puts the school in a very strong position to improve even further.

Within this very strong picture, there are two relatively weaker aspects. The school is good at checking regularly that each pupil makes good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this is not done as well in science, and the school is not in such a good position to spot a pupil who is slipping behind. The headteacher, governors and staff know their school well and have an accurate view of its effectiveness. They monitor the school's work in a systematic way. However, when senior leaders are evaluating teaching, through observing lessons or looking at pupils' work, not enough emphasis is placed upon how well pupils of different abilities are learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure pupils' progress in science is monitored as effectively as it is in English and mathematics.
- Sharpen the quality of monitoring, ensuring the learning and progress of individuals and groups are clearly evaluated.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children start Nursery with skills that are above those typically found amongst three year-olds. They make excellent progress in Nursery and Reception and, by the time they enter Year 1,

most exceed the goals expected of them. They continue to make very good progress from then on, right through the school. Standards are exceptionally high by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Science standards are not quite as high by the time pupils leave, but are still significantly above average. Over the last three years, pupils have achieved significantly better between Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2) than pupils nationally. In 2005, for instance, the school was in the top 10% of schools nationally for adding value in Key Stage 2. In 2006, they also achieved very well but did not make quite such good progress in science. Standards in core subjects are likely to be similarly high this year but pupils also do well in other subjects. Some good work was seen during the inspection in art and music and the school's self-evaluation shows the creative and performing arts and physical education are also particular strengths.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. Pupils have high levels of enjoyment and attendance levels are very high. They particularly enjoy a very wide range of activities at lunchtime and after school. All are encouraged to take part and the vast majority do. Pupils make excellent use of the opportunities to take exercise and keep active, and clearly understand why it is important to do so. They also have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet. They know how to keep safe, and play sensibly showing very good regard for the safety of others. Behaviour in and out of lessons is exemplary. Others agreed when one pupil said, 'There is no bullying at our school.' The school council is very influential. Members are particularly proud of the 'secret path' that is underway in the playground and the changes to how lunch boxes are organised. Pupils contribute in many ways to the wider community through, for example, singing at Christmas, growing vegetables in the summer, and taking a lead in raising money for various charities. Pupils' high standards and excellent personal and social skills put them in a very strong position to do well in their next stage of education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are excellent. Right from the start, in Nursery, teaching places a strong emphasis on developing independence and the skills of working together. Throughout the school, teachers plan lessons very well with adapted tasks that are very well matched to pupils' differing capabilities. Pupils find lessons interesting because they are varied and broken up with different activities, so that they do not spend too long being passive. Very occasionally, the pace of learning drops in lessons when teachers talk for longer than they need to or do not realise that the pupils can move on at a faster rate. It is obvious pupils take their learning seriously and are very keen to do their best. They respond well, for example, when given time to review the teachers' marking from their previous piece of work. They readily talk with a partner about what could be improved and share ideas to help one another. Pupils are very tuned-in to their own learning and realise that they learn things even when they go on trips and visits. One pupil summed it up: 'There's never a day when you can rest from learning.' Pupils' positive attitudes and their keen willingness to grasp opportunities contribute strongly to the rapid progress they make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils have a rich and varied curriculum which spans all subjects. This gives them a very good all-round education. The school rightly places emphasis on broadening pupils' experiences, through visits, visitors, special themed weeks and getting involved in local and national initiatives. Some of these occur through the school's excellent links with partner schools and organisations, including its strong and meaningful links with a school in South Africa. This is playing a key role in developing pupils' awareness and understanding of global citizenship. The recent Money Week brought pupils into contact with people from a variety of businesses. This helped to challenge pupils' perceptions and assumptions as well as give them opportunities to solve problems and get a feel for what it is like to be in business. The school is very effective in developing citizenship skills and encouraging pupils to reflect on moral and social issues, such as Fair Trade, world poverty and conservation. A short paragraph in this report cannot do justice to the breadth of opportunities that pupils experience. These play a vital part in pupils' enjoyment of school and are one reason why pupils achieve so well, academically and personally.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes exceptional care of pupils, who report their appreciation of the support they get from staff. Procedures to secure health, safety and well-being are rigorous and all statutory requirements are in place. A close check is kept on those pupils who are potentially vulnerable or whose families may be going through a challenging period. Pupils play their part by looking out for each other as well. 'No-one gets left out,' said one child. Teachers assess pupils' standards regularly and these assessments are used to set challenging targets so that pupils reach their potential. This works particularly well in reading, writing and mathematics. The school does not monitor pupils' progress in science as effectively as in English and mathematics, and cannot therefore be certain that each pupil is achieving well in science. A lot of time and effort goes into marking pupils' work in a way that is helpful to them. They appreciate the teachers' suggestions and also like the way they are given individual targets each term, so they know exactly what they need to do to get even better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Since the headteacher moved from being deputy head to head, last September, she has sustained the school's high standards as well as identifying what could be further improved. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. Together, they form a cohesive and effective senior management team which provides outstanding leadership. This is reflected in the very positive outcomes for pupils across all aspects of the school's work. It is also reflected in the happy atmosphere that pervades the school. One parent summed it up well by writing, 'I can honestly say I have nothing but praise for St Luke's. When I say goodbye to them each morning, I know that they are going to a school where they are known, valued and cared for as individuals. The community spirit of the school is quite remarkable.' Governors too play a perceptive and active role in the strategic leadership of the school. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use their professional expertise

well to question and challenge the direction the school is taking if they feel it will benefit the pupils.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Luke's CofE Primary School, Kingston Upon Thames, KT2 6EN

We visited your school recently and I wanted to write and say thank you to all of you who spoke to us about all the things you do at school. We enjoyed talking to you and would like to thank the School Council and some of the pupils in Year 5 and 6 for telling us so much about your school. Some of the things we will particularly remember are the pictures of Dunkirk in Year 3, the sea creatures in Reception, children in Nursery putting out the shed 'fire', the steel band, and that massive blue whale's tail in the hall. You have nothing but praise for your school and your parents think it's really good too. We agree - your school is outstanding!

The teaching in your school is excellent. Your teachers plan lots of different activities for you, including visits, special weeks, clubs and opportunities to meet visitors and work with artists, writers or musicians. This gives you a really good all-round education and means that you learn extremely well. Your standards of work are very high. Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and all the other teachers who have responsibilities are extremely good. We must not forget the governors. They too work extremely hard 'behind the scenes' to make sure the school gives you a very good education. Of course, you all help in this too. You behave exceptionally well and put a lot of effort into everything you do. You also help the school get better by offering your own suggestions and by getting involved in lots of ways. We like your idea of a secret path - that sounds great fun.

We have asked your headteacher and governors to work on two things to help make things even better. We would like your progress in science to be checked more carefully to make sure you all make really good progress. We have also asked your headteacher and senior teachers to keep a close eye on how you are learning, when they visit lessons or look at your written work. You are all doing very well indeed but you can help by letting your teacher know if you ever find work a bit too easy.

With very best wishes for the future,

Margaret Dickinson
Her Majesty's Inspector