

# St Loys Church of England Primary School, Weedon Lois

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122032
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292298
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	59
<b>School</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Gregory
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Hazelgrove
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Milthorpe Road Weedon Lois Towcester NN12 8PP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 860539
<b>Fax number</b>	01327 860539

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

St Loys is a very small, but expanding, primary school that serves Weedon Lois and the surrounding district. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals but the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above that found nationally. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Children enter the school with skills that are broadly at the level expected for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The views of many are reflected in the comment of one parent that, 'St Loys has a wonderful, caring family atmosphere and understands the importance of looking beyond "education" in order to help children develop all elements of their personality and intellect.' Parents are right to be pleased with the school because it provides an outstanding education.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain standards that are significantly above average by the end of Year 6. Children's skills are developed well in the Reception class, providing a very firm foundation for future learning. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are good in all year groups. Their scientific understanding is particularly good because of the innovative and practical teaching of this subject. The pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work are the only things that let them down. Pupils do well because the teaching is consistently good with work very well matched to the pupils' age and maturity. Occasionally, pupils are required to sit and listen to the teacher for too long before they carry out their activities. The school provides pupils with an outstandingly rich, vibrant and stimulating curriculum, with many enrichment opportunities. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning French and are keen to talk of their links with schools in many other countries. There is excellent care, guidance and support for the pupils. The high number of effective learning support assistants helps to ensure all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, do well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Children are given an excellent start in this area in the Reception class. Well structured activities help them to work and play together very well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and, in all classes, their behaviour and attitudes towards work are exemplary. The pupils' enjoyment of school, and all that it provides, is evident in the very high level of attendance. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and their commitment and maturity in supporting children who are less fortunate than themselves are impressive. The pupils are very keen to follow a healthy lifestyle and thoroughly enjoy opportunities for physical activities. They are, rightly, proud of their success in 'tag rugby', which culminated in them becoming county champions and competing at Twickenham.

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. The staff work very well together and the excellent support for them provided by the leadership helps drive the school forward. Whilst there is a commitment to ensuring all pupils do as well as they can academically, staff are very keen to take on board new initiatives to provide a stimulating environment in which pupils can excel in all areas of their learning and development. Governors challenge the school well and provide excellent support to help it reach its goals. Their support has been imperative in the school's successful bid for funding to improve and extend the accommodation to address the rising number of pupils. The school is very well placed to make further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work so that their standards in these areas improve.
- Ensure the pupils are not required to spend too long listening to their teachers before getting on with their activities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and standards are significantly above average. They make good progress in the Reception class and almost all reach or exceed the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Standards in national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2006 were significantly above average. At the end of Year 6, standards have been significantly above average in recent years and, as a result of this trend of improvement, they were exceptionally high in 2006. Whilst the current Year 6 pupils are not attaining these same high standards, they are achieving well in relation to their starting points in Year 3 and attaining standards that are well above those expected for their age. Standards in science are particularly good; the result of pupils having effective opportunities to develop their investigative and practical skills in this subject.

Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well; the result of early identification of their needs and very effective support and guidance from skilled support staff. The pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are very good, and are used very well to enhance their learning in other subjects. The quality of the pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work do not match the quality of its content. Not enough emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils write neatly and present their work as well as they can.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school and this is reflected in the continued rise in attendance rates which are now very high. Pupils are rightly very proud of their school and are keen to talk about the many awards it has gained. For example, the 'Healthy School' award is a reflection of their efforts to eat more healthily and participate in the many physical activities, including the 'huff and puff' activities at break times. Some 42 pupils took part in the St Loys C of E Primary School cross-country race that took place recently and acquitted themselves very well. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They talk knowledgeably of their involvement with an orphanage on the island of Rameswaram and of their support for children in Africa. These charitable activities, many of which are instigated by the pupils themselves, are a credit to the pupils' understanding of the need to serve the wider community and their commitment to supporting those less fortunate than themselves. These activities, together with links to European schools, helped in their successful bid for an International Schools Award.

The pupils take a full and active part in their own community, involving themselves in many church and village functions. The school council plays a full part in the life of the school and, for example, had their suggested colour scheme for the toilets adopted. There is little more to say about the pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards school other than that they are exemplary. The pupils' academic skills, use of ICT and their international links prepare them very well for the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with evidence of outstanding practice. Pupils achieve well because the teachers have high expectations of what they are capable of understanding and doing. Very good use is made of the skills of the good number of learning support staff to ensure pupils of all abilities make the progress of which they are capable. Children in the Reception class are provided with stimulating activities, well matched to their ability and maturity. The children learn well because lessons are fun. For example, their subtraction skills were enhanced well when they all enacted their version of 'eleven in the bed'!

A particular strength of teaching throughout the school is the way in which ICT is used to enhance learning. Pupils talk knowledgeably of how they use 'three-dimensional (3D) interactive software' to improve their understanding in a range of subjects, but particularly in science. Teachers plan work very well and it is matched carefully to pupils' ability. However, they do not expect sufficiently high standards of handwriting, or of pupils' presentation of their work. Occasionally, pupils are expected to sit for too long before engaging in their activities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Commencing in the Reception class, there is a very clear focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills. There is also a good emphasis on providing pupils with a varied and wide ranging curriculum. The lack of a hall does not impinge on opportunities for physical activities. Music, drama and the arts feature strongly in the school's curriculum. The very good use of teachers' specialist skills ensures excellent provision in subjects such as French. ICT features strongly throughout the school. The school's role as a 'leading school' for ICT is reflected in the imaginative ways in which it uses computers to enhance learning across the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched very well through a wide range of after school clubs, visits and visitors.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The school's arrangements to assess pupils' progress are very effective. Teachers match work very closely to the pupils' abilities. Resources, particularly learning support assistants, are used very effectively, together with intervention strategies, to maximise the pupils' progress. Assessment information is shared very well with pupils and parents so that they all know what needs to be done to maintain improvement. Pupils are very well cared for and they are confident in having an adult to turn to in the event of trouble. Child protection procedures and risk assessment are robust and ensure that the environment is very safe.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a drive to raise standards from staff at all levels. They support one another very effectively and the strong team approach ensures

that they are all pulling in the same direction for the benefit of the pupils. The drive for improvement is steered very effectively by the headteacher. Self-evaluation is carried out very effectively resulting in all in the school having a clear understanding of what it does well and what might be improved. The school viewed its effectiveness as good. This is not because of inaccurate self-evaluation but because the school is continually striving to improve. Staff are continually looking for new approaches to make the curriculum exciting and enjoyable for the pupils. These efforts are fruitful, helping not only to maintain the pupils' enthusiasm, but also that of the staff. The governors question what is happening in school and have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They too are not complacent and support the school very well, working hard to ensure the buildings and staff can accommodate the rise in pupil numbers.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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**

3 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Loys C of E Primary School, Weedon Lois, NN12 8PP

Thank you all very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. Your school is outstanding and you and your parents are right to be proud of it.

These are some of the best things about your school:

- The good progress you make in your learning so that you do very well in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6
- Your enthusiasm for lessons and other activities and your excellent behaviour
- The interesting and very wide range of activities that you all undertake
- The very good use made of computers to help you learn
- Your very good efforts to keep fit and well through taking part in sport and by eating healthily
- The good teaching and support you get from adults in the school
- The way staff care for and look after you
- The successful way in which the headteacher and senior staff manage the school.

This is what the school needs to do to make it even better:

- Help you to improve your handwriting skills and make sure you keep your work neat and tidy
- Make sure you do not sit for too long before you get on with your activities.

I am pleased that you enjoy school and wish you all the best for the future.

Thank you again for helping me with my work.

Yours faithfully

Paul Edwards Lead Inspector