

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100954
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	307536
Inspection dates	29–30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew New
Headteacher	Mr Ian Jones
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Saunders Ness Road Poplar London E14 3EB
Telephone number	020 7987 1753
Fax number	020 7536 9722

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	29–30 January 2008
Inspection number	307536

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Luke's is an average sized school, situated in an affluent area, but the community it serves does not reflect this. It admits some pupils from areas with a high level of economic deprivation. A high proportion of pupils are from ethnic minority groups and a large number of these are at an early stage of learning English. The take-up of free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also well above average. There is high rate of pupil mobility.

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 Primary School provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The headteacher's vision and his relentless pursuit of improved standards in all aspects of school life are central to its success. The excellent improvement the school has made in the past few years has been recognised in the local community and, as a result, the school is over-subscribed in the younger years.

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The consistently high expectations of the leadership team motivate staff, who share a common sense of purpose. They are committed to the St Luke's mission statement of 'working together for the good of our children'. All contribute to the school's excellent self-evaluation. The senior managers are excellent teachers. They coach and train less experienced staff so that teaching is of a high standard throughout the school. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress, which is all the more remarkable because many enter the school with language and social skills well below those expected for their age and a high proportion speak very little English.

The quality of education that pupils receive is outstanding and is carefully matched to all their needs. The school is highly inclusive so that all pupils achieve outstandingly well. As a result, standards achieved in English, mathematics and science are rising year-on-year and are above average. Pupils receive excellent pastoral care from all adults who work with them. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is of good quality. The Thursday mass provides excellent opportunities to appreciate world faiths. Pupils behave well in lessons and at break times. They act responsibly and safely; some older ones lead the younger ones in play and others act as sports leaders, but there could be a greater variety of jobs for them to do. All have a good understanding of how to have a healthy lifestyle and know that to succeed in life, they must do well at school. Pupils said they enjoy coming to school and 'come to get an education - that's what school is for'. They are being prepared outstandingly well for the next stages of education by their high standards of literacy and numeracy, and also by the role models they meet from local businesses. They work hard when directed by their teachers, but could be more independent in their learning. A few families do not make sure their children attend school as regularly as they should.

Given the progress made since the last inspection and its strong commitment to raising all round standards, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

In the Foundation stage, children experience excellent care. A mother said of her three-year-old son, 'I can't believe he's settled in so quickly; he loves it here after only two days'. Every day, children find an excellent range of learning activities to discover through play. They enjoy learning and make rapid progress, all of which is assessed carefully by teaching staff and used to provide further stimulating experiences. Every child is encouraged to move forward in language and social skills so the whole curriculum rapidly opens up to them. Older children in reception demonstrate confidence and independence, able to choose and carry out activities from those on offer. The quality of teaching is outstanding, as is the leadership and management. The co-ordinator receives excellent support and guidance from the headteacher.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 to show initiative and independence.
- Improve the variety of responsibilities available to pupils.
- Improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards have been rising steadily over the past five years, and in the 2007 national tests for eleven year-olds, standards in English, mathematics and science were above average. This represents outstanding achievement, considering that this group entered the school with well below average standards. Seven-year-old pupils also did well and achieved above average scores in their teacher assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to get even better results and to achieve even more challenging targets than last year. Pupils in Year 2 are also on course to reach higher levels than last year and the Foundation stage profile shows remarkable progress being made by Nursery and Reception children towards meeting the early learning goals for five-year-olds.

The high proportion of pupils coming into school at an early stage of learning English make outstanding progress in all subjects, and many reach higher than the expected level 4 by the age of eleven. Pupils of higher ability also achieve very well. The proportion of higher grades in national tests is increasing. Nearly all pupils with learning difficulties who struggle with reading, writing or mathematics, reach the levels expected for their age by the time they leave school, which signifies considerable success for these pupils and outstanding achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show a good understanding of the shared values that make up 'St. Luke's Way'. As a result of this strong school ethos, they make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school, particularly the impressive range of out-of-class activities in which they all take part. The programme of lunchtime clubs has had a good impact on their behaviour and attitudes to school, which have improved greatly since the previous inspection. They work at a good pace in lessons when given specific tasks and cooperate well with others, but could show more initiative and independence. Pupils behave responsibly and safely. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. The school has worked hard to improve attendance though it remains a little below average. Pupils are outstandingly well prepared for the next stages of education and adult life. They make outstanding progress in developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). They gain high aspirations for future working life, through visits to a wide range of businesses and visits from business people. They are understanding and tolerant of the wide cultural mix in the community. The benefits of physical exercise and healthy eating are well understood and practised. They willingly take on duties around the school, but the variety of responsibilities available is too narrow. Good features include the school council and older pupils acting as the playtime play leaders.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding because of the outstanding achievement and progress that pupils make throughout the school. Teachers' planning makes full use of assessment to make sure that work meets the needs of all pupils, whatever their backgrounds or abilities, disability or ethnicity. Teaching assistants are fully involved in the planning and guide pupils surely towards their targets. A major strength of the school is the core of very strong teachers in its leadership team. The excellent practice they demonstrate is shared with less experienced staff, who develop rapidly through highly focused training and support in lessons. Teaching staff do their best to enrich pupils' experiences through such diverse activities as visits to a nearby farm or learning what makes a story 'creepy'. They make a point of developing spoken English on every occasion, through 'talking partners' and small group discussions. The school has an excellent system for tracking pupils' progress, which makes full use of regular and accurate assessments and are used to pick up very quickly on underachievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it meets the needs of all pupils extremely well. No group of children underachieves at this school. The curriculum is designed to open pupils' eyes to the world around them through for example, growing seeds, or taking walks to count and learn the meaning of road signs. Pupils enjoy a wide curriculum, which includes Spanish, and swimming in the on-site pool. The skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are promoted well. All Key Stage 2 pupils attend a lunchtime club. This enables them to enjoy sport, board games, sewing or cooking, after which they settle down quickly to afternoon school. This is often devoted to the wider curriculum devised in response to an issue from the previous inspection. There is also an outstanding provision of extra-curricular activities, trips and residential visits which broaden the pupils experience yet further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school has an excellent understanding of pupils' individual needs. Staff know their pupils well and develop warm relationships with them. Strong teamwork between teachers and assistants ensures that pupils having personal problems or difficulties in lessons are given extra help as soon as possible. Child protection procedures are clear and there are good procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying. Pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to if necessary. Assessment procedures are outstanding. Pupils' progress is checked at regular intervals and the information is carefully analysed to reveal when pupils need more help. The results are used very effectively to guide the teaching of classes, groups and individuals. Targets for improvement are set in English and mathematics and pupils are also involved in assessing their own progress. As a result, they have a clear understanding of how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and pursues improvement with great determination. His vision is shared by the strong senior management team and all staff. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress through the school and standards have risen significantly in recent years. The key to this is the way that regular and rigorous checks made on each pupil's progress are acted upon. Particularly effective use is made of the expertise of senior teachers to support new members of staff. Training often makes use of excellent expertise present in the school. The sharing of exemplary and good practice is actively encouraged by the headteacher and senior team and helps develop teaching skills very effectively. The school improvement plan accurately identifies key priorities for improvement and procedures for monitoring progress towards these targets are rigorous. Governance is outstanding. Governors are closely involved in school life. They play a strong role in forging links with the local community, such as the current community house project.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

11 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's Church of England Primary School, London, E14 3EB

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school recently. We really appreciated your willingness to speak to us. It was very helpful.

We were very pleased with your school. We think your headteacher, teachers and other adults work really hard and give you an excellent education. As a result, you are all doing really well in your studies. By the time you leave Year 6, you are very well prepared for your secondary schools.

There are only a few things that we thought could be improved.

- You could do more independent work in class and on projects.
- There could be more jobs for you to do to show how responsible you are.
- Some of you could come to school more often.

You can help by making sure that you all attend school regularly and on time so that you do not miss out on all the opportunities your school offers you!

We wish you all well in your life in school and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead Inspector