

# St Laurence CofE VA Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112912
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311048
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Newell

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

<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>	
School (total)	245
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Singfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Fell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Collingwood Road Long Eaton Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG10 1DR

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	311048

**Telephone number**

01159728469

**Fax number**

01159728469

**Age group** 4–11

**Inspection dates** 16–17 September 2008

**Inspection number** 311048

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 Laurence's is an average size school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils who need extra help with their learning, including pupils with a statement of special educational need is similar to that found nationally. A small percentage of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds with some at an early stage of acquiring English. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is provided for children in the Reception class. The school has gained Basic Skills, Healthy Schools and ECO bronze awards as well as Activemark for its commitment to pupils' physical activity.

## 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 enables pupils to achieve well and to leave school as well rounded individuals who are well prepared for the future. Parents are very supportive of the school. The comment of one, 'A very caring school where my children have progressed well,' is replicated by many others. The headteacher has brought a strong vision and commitment to the work of the school and has set the bar of expectation higher to help take the school on to the next level. The school's good track record of improvement to date suggests the capacity is there to help make this vision a reality.

The current leadership has overseen an upward trend in standards by the time pupils leave school. Historically, from below expected starting points, pupils have made good progress in EYFS and Years 1 and 2, but progress had stalled in Years 3 to 6. This is no longer the case because few stones have been left unturned in tackling weaknesses in teaching and securing improvement in assessment and target setting. Standards are now above average overall, although raising attainment in the problem solving aspect of mathematics for the middle ability pupils remains work in progress. Achievement for pupils across the school is now good because teaching is consistently good. It is lively, imaginative and challenging and hooks and maintains the attention and interest of the pupils. Opportunities, however, are missed to help pupils develop into skilled independent learners.

A great strength of the school is the pupils. They are keen and enthusiastic learners whose behaviour is often outstanding, but whose enjoyment of school is not always reflected in the average attendance rates. They are caring and committed individuals who genuinely look out for one another. Pupils' understanding of what is needed to keep healthy is good and in keeping safe, their understanding is excellent. They greatly value and appreciate cultural diversity. It is in this climate that the push is now on to encourage pupils to take more initiative and responsibility for their own learning.

The curriculum provides well for the needs of pupils and is effective at utilising pupils' literacy and other skills across different subjects. Enrichment activities are extensive. Studies and links with different schools and countries help pupils gain national and global perspectives as well as an understanding of the locality. The care of pupils is outstanding because staff go out of their way to meet pupils' needs and the individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated. Academic guidance is developing well but is not yet at the same level because of some inconsistencies in the use of assessment data, pupil involvement in setting their own targets and the quality of marking of pupils' work.

The very good leadership of the headteacher, the effective senior leadership team, the knowledgeable and challenging governing body and the strong sense of team spirit all contribute to the success of the school. There is honesty and accuracy in the school's self-evaluation. This school knows its strengths and weaknesses and recognises the need to organise its plentiful test and assessment data in a more efficient manner to give a better overview of pupils' progress. The continued development of the school is in safe hands.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start to their educational lives in the Reception class because of the good provision and teaching. Adults work well together to provide a wide range of learning activities.

Teamwork is used to good effect to assess children's progress and this information is being used increasingly well to guide and inform future learning tasks. The indoor accommodation is colourful, attractive and well organised. The school is rightly looking to add to the quality of the outdoor learning area although it is regularly used for outdoor play and lots of exciting sand, water, digging and 'messy' activities. Tasks are often well matched to the differing abilities of the children and a good balance is struck between adult-led and child-initiated tasks. Occasionally, some tasks lack a specific focus to help accelerate children's learning. Relationships and communications with parents are effective, and good attention is given to ensuring that welfare, safety and safeguarding requirements are all met. Over time, provision has been managed effectively in helping children to achieve well and to enjoy their early school lives.

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

- Accelerate the progress and achievement of the middle ability pupils in mathematics, particularly in investigative and problem-solving work.
- Ensure that assessment data is organised in the most effective way to give a clear overview of pupils' progress and to support academic guidance.
- Provide opportunities to help pupils develop as independent learners who take an active role in setting and reviewing their own targets for improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and from below expected starting points, make good progress in reaching standards that are close to national expectations when they enter Year 1. Over time, pupils have consistently made good progress in Years 1 and 2 and this has seen standards by the end of Year 2 being above the national averages. Inconsistencies in teaching had led to some underachievement by the end of Year 6 and standards not being high enough. However, under the driving leadership of the current headteacher, weaknesses were robustly tackled, target setting became more challenging, and initiatives aimed at pushing up standards were rigorously and consistently embedded. The result is that progress and achievement across the school overall, for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and from different ethnic backgrounds, are now good and standards have significantly improved with reading, writing and science being above average. The school recognises that work is still to be done to improve how well the middle ability pupils achieve in mathematics so that performance matches other subjects.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development contributes much to the school's success. Pupils enjoy school and are motivated learners although attendance is only satisfactory. They have excellent relationships with teachers and other adults and get on very well with each other so that they learn as a cohesive community. Behaviour is usually exemplary. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and is effectively dealt with by staff. They have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and an excellent awareness of managing risks in their lives. There are significant strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They readily embrace the shared values of the school community and have an excellent awareness of fair play. Equally strong is their awareness and respect for differing faiths and traditions. They make a telling contribution to the school and wider community through their links with a school in India.

Closer to home, they support numerous charities and carry out many important roles around the school, for example, as reading mentors and by participating in the influential school council. Pupils overall are well prepared for life in their next schools. In spite of these strengths, pupils do not always show sufficient independence, initiative or responsibility for their own learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good progress of pupils that is now a consistent feature of school life owes much to the quality of teaching. Across the school, relationships are very strong and each classroom is a hive of activity. Lessons are interesting, fun and capture the imagination of the pupils with the teaching assistants playing an influential and valued role. Questioning is often sharp and incisive and adults go the extra mile in building up the confidence and self-esteem of all pupils. However, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to develop as independent learners. Where such opportunities are on offer, pupils rise to the challenge by showing initiative and creativity. At times, teaching is outstanding because it challenges and engages the pupils fully and leaves them hanging on to the teacher's every word. Where marking of work is at its best, it makes crystal clear what pupils need to do to improve. The school recognises that this good practice is not consistent and is addressing the issue through a more rigorous implementation of the school's marking policy.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum generally meets pupils' needs well and is constantly under review. It is enhanced by the addition of French, which is currently taught in the juniors, and opportunities to play musical instruments. The school links different subjects so that pupils learn through stimulating activities, although at present there are not enough initiatives for pupils to develop their enterprise skills. Leaders are aware that there is not always sufficient challenge for some pupils in mathematics, particularly in investigative work. Recent measures to tackle this have begun to have an impact on achievement, but it is work in progress. There is an excellent programme of personal, health and social education, which includes helping pupils to value diversity and celebrate shared values. Good partnership arrangements with a specialist secondary school have enabled the school to broaden provision in science, drama, music and art. Pupils' learning and personal development are well supported by visits and visiting experts and there is a good range of after-school clubs. These enrichment activities extend beyond the school as many pupils engage in sporting and musical events in the local area.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care and support are excellent. The welfare of the pupils is afforded a very high priority and adds much to the sense of community that envelops the school. Procedures for health and safety and safeguarding comply with regulations. Unacceptable behaviour is rare but is dealt with effectively. The school's leaders elicit and act upon the views of pupils through the school council and through questionnaires. Pupils with specific learning needs receive sharply focused support, which helps them to be fully included in all aspects of school life. The 'Positive Play Group' is a particular strength because it provides excellent individual support for vulnerable

pupils and their families. The school's own internal support mechanisms are enhanced by extensive work with outside agencies. There are robust systems to track pupils' progress but the information is not collated in the best way to impact on academic guidance. In addition, pupils are not involved enough in setting and reviewing their own targets for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has been the catalyst for improvement since the last inspection. She has moulded together a cohesive team of staff who share her commitment to take the school on still further. Rigorous systems are in place for monitoring teaching and learning that have brought about significant improvements. Identified weaknesses in writing and science have been assiduously tackled and as a result, standards have greatly improved. She is supported in her endeavours by a strong and effective senior management team whose good practice in evaluating provision is to be used as a model for other subject leaders. Assessment and performance data analysis is thorough and robust, but the information is complex and lacks a clear and accessible overview of pupils' progress as they move through the school. Governance is good because governors support yet challenge the school. They know the school well because of planned focused visits and share the commitment to continuous improvement.





## 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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Laurence CE VA Primary School, Nottingham, NG10 1DR

You will probably remember that we visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would first like to say thank you for making us feel so welcome. I have told your teachers how polite and helpful you were. Everywhere we went we were met with smiling faces. Through our discussions, it was good to hear how much you enjoy school and all the different activities you take part in. It was good to hear about how safe you feel in school, that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried.

We found many good things about St Laurence's and I have to say that I agree with you and your headteacher that it is a good school and a fun place to learn! Teachers and other staff make learning interesting and help you to make good progress and achieve well. The visits, visitors and the after school clubs all add to your enjoyment. The school is very good at helping you to keep safe and healthy and goes the extra mile in making sure you are safe and well supported. Mrs Fell is a very good headteacher and together with all the teachers, staff and governors they form a strong team who are determined to provide you with a good quality of education.

There is another strength of the school that I have not mentioned yet. That is you, the children. Your behaviour is excellent and you are keen and eager to learn. You get on very well with each other and you contribute a great deal to the school and local community. You know a lot about keeping healthy and what you know about keeping safe is outstanding. Well done!

Even good schools like yours can get better. I have asked Mrs Fell and the teachers to help some of you reach even higher standards in mathematics, to improve the systems for checking how well you are doing and to help you become accomplished independent learners. I know that Mrs Fell, the staff and governors want the school to be even more successful, and I know you will continue to work hard, attend regularly, behave well and remember that you have a part to play in how well you achieve! I wish you every success in your future. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead inspector