

# Saint Lawrence Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116267
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312237
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Beryl Richmond

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	179
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	20
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Sarah Broadbent
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Vivienne Wheeler (Acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 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>	Amery Hill Alton GU34 2BY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01420 84400
<b>Fax number</b>	01420 82148

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St. Lawrence Church of England Primary is a small school. It provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a full-time Reception class. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, or from minority ethnic groups or learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with social, behavioural and emotional needs and speech, language, communication and moderate learning difficulties is just below the national average, although the proportion with statements of educational need is above. Pupils attend from a wide area. An acting headteacher joined the school in September 2008 for one term. A substantive headteacher has been appointed for January 2009. The deputy headteacher joined the school in April 2008 and there have been many staff changes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Lawrence Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The acting headteacher's excellent leadership, ably supported by the deputy headteacher has quickly gained the trust of staff and parents. A typical parent's comment is, 'the headteacher is approachable and honest and shows parents respect'.

They have prioritised areas for improvement and have shared their high expectations in all areas of the school's work effectively with pupils and their parents. Firstly they set clear boundaries for behaviour and took effective action so that the school is calm and purposeful. Most pupils behave well. Support given to pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour and emotions is good so that they are fully included in the school's work. Many parents commented favourably on the way that behaviour has recently improved. Pupils say that they like the new behaviour systems, which make explicit the rewards and sanctions, including the 'courtesy point system'. Stories are used well in assemblies so that pupils learn how they could create 'heaven on earth' by caring for each other. Parents agree that the school takes good care of their children and praise improved communications with them. They appreciate the staff's friendly and open approach. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Good links with a wide range of organisations, for example, the adjacent secondary school and the 'Teddy Bears Service' at the church, have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for secondary school.

Achievement is satisfactory because teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some teaching is good, but this is not consistent across the whole school. Teachers do not always set pupils sufficiently challenging work. Progress is tracked well. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are broadly in line with national averages. Year 6 pupils met their targets for English and mathematics at level 4, but a smaller proportion than would be expected nationally achieved level 5. In recent years, pupils' progress in writing has on occasions been inadequate. Although achievement has improved, writing still remains a priority for improvement. Systematic teaching of letters and sounds has been introduced and the school recognises the need for more opportunities for drama and role-play to stimulate pupils' thoughts before writing like the good use of an evacuee's battered suitcase in Years 5 and 6. Targets are now set for pupils to make good progress. Current assessment information and evidence from work scrutiny shows that Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve higher standards in 2009. Throughout the school, evidence from books and lesson observations shows that pupils are making satisfactory progress. Homework arrangements have been improved so that it better supports pupils' current learning.

The satisfactory curriculum has some good elements; all pupils learn French, there are residential visits and visitors are regularly invited into school to enrich the curriculum. However, it does not have consistent appeal and interest and consequently pupils' enjoyment is only satisfactory. For example, pupils have limited opportunities for practical investigations in science.

The school is not complacent and is improving. Self-evaluation is satisfactory because although senior leaders carry it out rigorously, not all staff are fully involved. Leadership and management is satisfactory overall as there are variations in the experience and skills of the staff and their impact on achievement. The school's recent track record indicates a satisfactory capacity for improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Home visits, 'songs and rhymes' sessions for parents and children and a strong nurturing environment, contribute well to children settling happily. Staff know the children well and there is good daily communication with parents. Relationships are good and children are developing well personally, socially and emotionally. Leadership and management and teaching and learning are satisfactory. From a below expected starting point when children first start in Reception they make satisfactory achievement. During their time in Reception children did not catch up quickly enough, particularly in language development, to meet the expected learning goals by the end of the year. Planning does not take sufficient account of assessment information, although there is regular planned assessment and ongoing assessments take place. For example, adjustments to planning for letters and sounds work has not taken place quickly enough to ensure that children build on what they already know. Accommodation is small and there is no defined EYFS outdoor area. Consequently children do not have sufficient access to outdoor resources, which are important for their outdoor play and which contribute to their learning in all areas of the curriculum. The school is located in a conservation area and there are restrictions on external changes to the building. However, school leaders are looking at possible solutions for this class in a larger classroom where an outdoor area could be provided. Children use the adjacent playground regularly for outdoor activities, weather permitting, as there is no cover and the limited resources cannot be left outside during break times. Satisfactory support is provided for children, including those learning English as an additional language. Care is good. For example, the school works flexibly with parents to ensure that younger children in Year 1 can benefit from learning experiences that are appropriate for their age in Reception.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve children's progress, particularly in speaking, listening, reading and writing, in Reception, by raising expectations of what they can achieve and by providing an enclosed well resourced outdoor learning area with a cover so that outdoor learning can always take place.
- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in writing, across the school, by making better use of assessment information to challenge pupils to do their best.
- Make the curriculum more exciting and interesting so that it is more appealing to pupils, and encourages them to become independent learners.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but have areas of underperformance will have a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Although pupils usually achieve average standards by the end of Year 6 from expected starting points, progress in subjects has not been consistent. Generally, progress in mathematics and science has been better than in English, particularly writing, where sometimes progress has been inadequate. In 2008, a smaller proportion of pupils achieved level 5 than would be expected nationally. These pupils' starting points at the end of Year 2 were lower than usual and school documentation indicates that pupils' behaviour was not good enough and had a detrimental impact on their progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils made better progress than in previous

years in writing. Current books show that pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop writing skills. Prompt support is provided, for example in reading, when underachievement is identified. Appropriate resources are provided and work is planned satisfactorily to meet the needs of pupils with moderate learning, speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural and emotional needs and those learning English as an additional language. These pupils achieve in line with their peers.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils from diverse backgrounds form positive relationships and feel secure and valued. In the recent past, a few pupils have been excluded on a number of occasions, but this term there have been no exclusions. This is because the newly introduced strategies to improve behaviour are having a positive impact. Pupils know what to do if someone with specific difficulties finds it hard to manage their behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe and are clear about whom they could go to if they need help. In order to keep healthy, pupils take part in a wide variety of activities like multi-skill training and other exercises. They take their responsibilities as play leaders and information and communication technology monitors seriously. School council members interviewed the deputy headteacher and have recently put forward a proposal for a water fountain in the playground, which has been agreed. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the diverse cultures in the United Kingdom.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Staff's management of pupils, some of whom have very challenging emotional and behavioural needs, is good. This means that classrooms are harmonious places of work. Relationships are good and this enables pupils to build their self-confidence. Support staff are deployed well to offer specific focused support. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils well enough to plan activities that match their differing needs and this slows down pupils' progress, especially the higher attainers. Interactive white boards are used well to engage pupils' interest. Marking is satisfactory. There are some examples of good practice, where teachers comment both on what pupils have done and on what they need to do to improve but it is not consistent across all classes.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, each class looks after their area of the garden. History is a strength and there are good links with the local museum. Opportunities to develop pupils' enthusiasm and interest in writing through drama and other such activities are not yet fully explored although there are examples of good practice. The introduction of six block cross-curricular themes is beginning to have an impact in raising pupils' involvement and interest. Limited science resources are restricting opportunities for investigative practical activities. A good range of out of school activities and clubs are popular with both boys and girls.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Parents speak highly of the support they and their children receive. Child protection and safe guarding procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements. Pupils with behavioural and emotional needs make good progress because the systems and procedures to manage and monitor behaviour are good and cater for pupils' individual needs. The school works closely with outside agencies and families to deal with the persistent absence of a few pupils to improve the situation. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress and identify areas for improvement. There are a few good examples of peer evaluation using graded steps in writing in Key Stage 2 but it is not consistent practice. Pupils do not always have curricular targets so that they can develop as independent learners who know what they need to learn to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has an accurate view of its performance. The supportive governing body reviewed the way it works to become more effective as a 'critical friend'. Committees have been reorganised and governors now have up-to-date information. More experienced staff give good support and feedback to less experienced colleagues and this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Community cohesion is satisfactory. The school welcomes all pupils and has good local and international links but national contacts are less well developed. The local authority's close involvement with the school will continue.

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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?	3
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	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

07 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saint Lawrence Church of England Primary School, Alton, GU34 2BY

Thank you very much for helping us during the inspection, particularly by talking to us about your school. We were impressed by your friendliness and politeness. Your school is satisfactory. Here are some of the things that we think are best about your school.

- Your acting headteacher and deputy headteacher have made important improvements, particularly in sharing their expectations for excellent behaviour and making clear to you all what the rewards and sanctions are. Adults are working together well as a team to do their best to improve your school.
- Most of you behave well. You are sensible if other pupils do not behave well because your school has taught you what to do in these circumstances. This means that your classrooms are pleasant places to learn in and you have good relationships with adults in school.
- You take care in the way that you present your work. You are making at least satisfactory progress because teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good.
- Your school has some good links with organisations, like the church, the secondary school and the museum, which provide interesting opportunities for you to learn.
- Your attendance is good and most of you come to school regularly and on time.
- Your school is forming stronger links with your parents, which they appreciate, so that they are more involved in your learning.
- Adults take good care of you and ensure that if you need help, you know who to talk to if you are worried about anything.
- You are developing well personally and understand very well about staying healthy and keeping safe. You contribute well to your school community, for example, as members of the school council and by looking after the garden.

We have asked your school to help you to improve your achievement and standards, particularly in writing, by giving you more challenging work. We would also like you to have more interesting and stimulating learning activities so that you enjoy school more and develop independent learning skills. We would like the children in the Reception class to make quicker progress in learning language skills, like reading and writing. We would also like them to have their own outdoor area, with outdoor resources and a cover so that their outdoor learning can always take place.

I would like to send you my best wishes for your future success in whatever you choose to do.

Yours sincerely

Beryl Richmond

Lead Inspector