

# St Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123496
<b>Local Authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	314612
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katie Chesters
<b>Headteacher</b>	Allyson Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Preston-upon-the-Wealdmoors Telford TF6 6DH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 387780
<b>Fax number</b>	01952 387782

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. Due to the small size of the school, pupils are taught in three mixed age classes. Attainment on entry to the school is similar to that found for children of this age in most schools. The number of children entering and leaving the school in the juniors is high for a school of this size. The school has an above average proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## 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 with several outstanding features. Its success owes much to the good leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body, and the good teaching and teamwork of highly committed and professional staff. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. 'Our children would come in on weekends to school if they could', said one parent speaking for many.

By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are above average and pupils' achievements are good overall. This is due to good teaching, coupled with the use of good quality resources and good parental support. In reading and science, standards are well above average and pupils' achievements are very good, due to particularly well focused teaching of comprehension and experimentation respectively. At times, pupils are not sufficiently challenged due to insufficient use of information from assessments. This restricts their progress, especially for the more capable pupils. In 2007, standards dipped in reading in Year 2 and English and mathematics in Year 6. The school immediately analysed the reasons and took effective action, so that pupils are now making their customary good progress, especially in reading. The school is now well placed to meet its challenging targets in 2008 and has good capacity for improvement.

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and attain the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 other than in personal, social and emotional development where progress is good and children's attainment exceeds the expected standards. Teaching is satisfactory but does not focus clearly enough on the next steps that children need to take to improve, which slows down their acquisition of basic skills. The more capable children in the Foundation Stage are not always given sufficient support to practise their letter and number formation.

Relationships between adults and pupils are exemplary and contribute to good learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of detailed targets and good support from teaching assistants.

The school's mission statement 'to strive to do our best and to make the most of opportunities available to us' is reflected in pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. This is brought about by very strong pastoral care and guidance and an extremely stimulating curriculum. Pupils develop outstanding attitudes to learning and their behaviour is exemplary. Care, guidance and support are good overall but links with outside agencies, other schools and the community are outstanding. These help pupils to make an outstandingly positive contribution to the community. Pupils love their school. 'We are a big family here and we are valued for our uniqueness,' said one member of the school council. Pupils feel extremely safe due to the exceptionally thorough procedures aimed at safeguarding them. The outstanding range of sports activities and the superb curricular provision result in pupils developing an extremely good understanding of how to be fit and healthy.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has done much in a very short time to move the school forward. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and offers a good degree of support and challenge for the school.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

The provision for the youngest children in the school is satisfactory with some good features. They make satisfactory progress overall due to sound teaching and learning. However, they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of working with older pupils and the outstanding relationships with the class teacher and support staff. Children are very well cared for and known extremely well by all adults in the school. At times adults do not always intervene often enough in play activities to ensure more capable children learn as well as they can, particularly in developing correct letter and number formation. The curriculum is good and covers all the necessary areas of learning. Good use is made of the outside environment. The tracking of children's progress is satisfactory but as yet, does not focus consistently on identifying what children need to do to improve their basic skills. This is the major reason why children's progress is satisfactory rather than good.

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

- Improve teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage by focusing more clearly on what each child needs to do to improve their basic skills and helping more capable children to practise correct letter and number formation.
- Throughout the school, ensure that information from assessment is consistently used to plan the next steps of pupils' learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are generally above average, with the pupils achieving well. The dip in results in 2007 was swiftly dealt with and the school is poised for improved outcomes this year. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 standards in writing and mathematics are above average. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading are well above average due to the school's strong emphasis on comprehension, which has paid handsome dividends. Standards in science by Year 6 are also well above average due to expert teaching and good opportunities to set up and evaluate experiments. The relatively high number of pupils entering the school with learning difficulties tends to adversely affect the school's test results. Nevertheless, these pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Progress in the Foundation Stage is not better than satisfactory because children do not make sufficient progress in basic skills. The best progress is made in their personal, social and emotional development.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils love coming to school and attendance is good. Pupils of all ages are extremely happy here and they feel exceptionally safe in an environment where they say there is virtually no bullying. Behaviour in class and around the school is excellent and this makes a very positive contribution to the way pupils learn. Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to lead healthy lives with one pupil saying that the fruit scheme for older pupils has made everyone 'more lively and happy'. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding overall. There are outstanding links with the Church, which pupils visit regularly. Pupils show extremely high levels of respect for others saying things like 'everyone here is special in their own way', praising each other and being extremely polite to visitors as well as their friends. Pupils learn of other

cultures through religious education and special themed days. There are excellent links with many aspects of the community, and local villages are very supportive of school events. Pupils, especially through the work of the school council, have been extremely closely involved in improving the school community to everyone's benefit. Pupils are acquiring a good basis for their future economic well-being through developing good literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

A strong feature of the teaching in the school is the outstanding quality of relationships between staff and pupils. This enables pupils to feel exceptionally safe and secure in learning because they know that their contributions and viewpoints are valued. Teamwork between staff is very strong. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning disabilities and/or disabilities that promote outstanding personal development and good academic progress. Staff make very good use of ICT in lessons that bring learning alive, and which helps pupils develop outstanding attitudes to learning. The presentation of work is variable and some of the pupils' books are untidy. In some lessons, pupils are not moved on fast enough because staff are not continually assessing how the pupils are doing and offering more challenging work other than when pupils are taught in small focus groups. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory with good features in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development. There are missed opportunities to develop children's basic skills by matching work to their learning needs, especially for the higher attaining children.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Every opportunity to learn outdoors through activities such as trips to museums, a visit to Shropshire Archives and planning a sensory garden, is maximised. Pupils are given an outstanding range of learning opportunities that enable them to be healthy, understand personal safety and learn about the contribution they can make to the community. The curriculum is highly creative. Pupils are given many opportunities to work with artists and authors, which promote their creative talents and enable them to gain a good understanding of this aspect of the world of work. Tag rugby, basketball, gymnastics, choir and participation in village and church festivals ensure that pupils develop very good levels of fitness and excellent skills in relating to other people. The recent Japanese day, led by a parent, contributed significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development where pupils learnt about many aspects of Japanese culture. The school's exceptionally good provision for personal, social and health education enables pupils to fully understand their feelings and evaluate the impact of their actions on others.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils receive exceptional levels of pastoral care and this is key to the excellent relationships that are in place at all levels. This support enables pupils with specific learning and personal needs to make good progress as it is tailored to their needs. The school makes excellent use of outside agencies when required and procedures for safeguarding pupils are outstanding.

Parents are particularly grateful for the nurturing ethos in the school, which supports and raises pupils' confidence, enabling them to learn. The academic guidance given to pupils is good, although some of the tracking systems are relatively new and information from these is not yet used consistently to plan the next steps of learning. Pupils are generally aware of their longer-term targets but do not know consistently enough how to improve their work, especially in mixed Reception and Year 1 classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and assistant headteacher lead a very strong team of committed staff who work exceptionally hard at giving their pupils the very best start to life. Their impact is seen in the pupils' good academic progress and outstanding personal development. In the past year the school has received many awards, including Healthy Schools Status and Artsmark Silver Award. Good self-evaluation, brought about by regular monitoring of the school's work, ensures that it knows its strengths and areas for development well. The well informed governors give strong support and challenge the school's leaders where necessary, but they are not yet fully evaluating the impact of their spending decisions on standards. The school development plan is a very thorough document but success criteria are not yet linked to the academic benefits of identified provision. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and all pupils are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life. The headteacher, through very rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, has set appropriate targets for the staff's performance management. Realistic and challenging long-term targets have been set for pupils based on thorough analysis of their progress, but the school's leaders have not yet ensured that data are used consistently to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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>	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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 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>	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.

**Annex A**

**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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

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**Annex B**

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

21 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lawrence CofE (VC) Primary School, Telford TF6 6DH

- Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we recently inspected your school. You were very helpful, friendly and confident. We really enjoyed our visit. Yours is a good school with several outstanding aspects. Here are some of the things that we found out on our visit which we would like to share with you.
- You attain above average academic standards and you make good progress overall; your progress in reading and science is very good.
- You are ever so well behaved and have outstanding attitudes to learning; you thoroughly enjoy working with artists and authors.
- The learning opportunities you experience are excellent; some of your work on canals, based on research in the Shropshire Archives, was outstanding.
- You really love your teachers and your school.
- Your headteacher is leading your school well.
- You are encouraged to keep really fit and healthy with all the sports activities you undertake.
- You are developing into caring, confident citizens.
- We have asked your teachers to:
  - Make sure work for the youngest ones helps them improve faster and form their letters and numbers correctly when they are ready for this.
  - Look more closely at your previous learning and use information from assessment to challenge you when you find learning too easy.

Thanks for helping us out. Keep working hard and trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Lead inspector

21 February 2008

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Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley  
Lead inspector