

St Lawrence CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130884
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315645
Inspection date	15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Barbara Atcheson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter English
Headteacher	John Brine
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2004
School address	Dog Lane Napton-on-the-Hill Southam CV47 8LU
Telephone number	01926 812447
Fax number	01926 812356

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small Church of England village primary school. It principally serves the village of Napton and its neighbouring villages. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and free school meals eligibility is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is lower than the national average. A senior teacher was appointed in September 2007. The acting headteacher, appointed in September 2007 was made permanent headteacher in March 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's accurate self-evaluation that St Lawrence C of E Primary School provides a good quality of education. The new headteacher has quickly formed an accurate view of the school. Effectively supported by the governors, his new senior management team and the staff, he has engendered an infectious enthusiasm to raise standards and achievement. Parents recognise the hard work that the school has undertaken. One parent said that it is 'a wonderful, supremely happy school, where my son has thrived'.

The school is a calm, purposeful environment where all are valued and encouraged to succeed. As a result, pupils really enjoy school, they make good progress in their personal development and achieve well academically. They are confident learners who listen attentively, share ideas and take pride in what they do. They are polite and their behaviour is good.

Children join the school with the skills expected for children of a similar age. Good teaching means that pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils share their teachers' love of learning and a desire to improve. One said, 'I like working in class because I always sit next to people it's nice to learn with.' Senior staff recognised and successfully tackled a need to raise standards and achievement for higher achieving pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in writing across the school. The way that pupils are now set for mathematics has meant that the curriculum is more tailored to pupils' learning needs. This, coupled with a greater emphasis on helping pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills, has already shown an improvement in pupils' achievement. Staff have eagerly embraced high quality training to deliver a more creative approach to writing. This, together with the introduction of a good system to check the progress of groups of pupils in writing, has helped to raise standards, but staff are not complacent and recognise that there is more to be done. Systems to check pupils' progress in mathematics and science are only in their infancy.

Assessment is not as consistently accurate as it could be, in order to raise standards and achievement still further, because not all teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of pupils' levels of learning. A small minority of parents, mainly with children in Reception and Year 1, say that they are unhappy with the present mixed-aged classes because they feel that children underachieve. Inspectors found that although the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory some of the activities are limited in the contribution that they make to children's learning.

Pupils enjoy an interesting curriculum, which includes both French and German. A wide variety of trips, special events and visitors to the school gives pupils an insight into the way different communities live and contributes well to their spiritual, moral social and cultural development. They know how to stay safe. Their keen awareness of healthy living is partly because they grow vegetables in their organic garden and then often cook them to eat. It is also because they have great opportunities to use challenging play equipment and take part in lots of physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children feel confident and enjoy school from the start. They integrate quickly into school routines and enjoy the experiences planned for them, particularly those in the outdoor area. This gives the children the time that they need to practise skills and experiment; however, some

activities lack challenge and are not as stimulating as they could be. Teaching is satisfactory. Reception children are in the same class as Year 1 and planning does not always cater sufficiently for the needs of Reception-aged children. The class teacher and teaching assistants make sure that they place the appropriate emphasis upon developing children's skills in speaking, listening and personal development to enable them to make satisfactory progress, so that most reach average standards, and a few exceed them, by the time they reach Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and accuracy of assessment, particularly teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' levels of learning.
- Monitor more effectively the progress of all groups of pupils in mathematics and science to identify their specific needs, and to raise standards in these subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress and reach standards that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school quickly recognised that, although a high number of pupils attain higher levels in reading, fewer attained the higher levels in mathematics and writing. Newly implemented measures to address this have begun to be reflected in the increased rates of progress. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress from their starting points to reach standards above the national average in mathematics and science. Last year, standards in English were broadly average at the end of Year 6 owing to a weakness in writing. Once identified, measures were quickly taken to remedy this and consequently standards are already rising. The individual needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively addressed; this means that they make good progress in the light of their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school immensely and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance and their enthusiasm for learning. Strong links with the church help to ensure that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils know right from wrong. They are caring and considerate to each other as well as courteous and polite. As a result, they form strong relationships both with each other and with adults. They have a good understanding of cultural diversity gained through visits to local places of worship and celebration of festivals. They know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils appreciate that their own enjoyment of learning stems from the dedication and enthusiasm of the teachers. One said 'Our teachers help us, but they always make it fun, even when it's hard.' Teachers have a good ability to question pupils and to draw out ideas. Both teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at helping pupils who find learning difficult so that they make good progress in line with their classmates. Teachers promote independent learning well and the teaching of writing skills is now good as a direct result of recent training. Teachers'

knowledge and understanding of the level of pupils' learning are not always secure and this affects the accuracy with which they assess the pupils. It means that, at times, work is not always sufficiently stimulating or challenging, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

'Good lessons, good trips, good clubs' is how one pupil sums up what he likes about the school. This demonstrates how much pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum, which includes French and German and is enhanced by outstanding extra-curricular activities. The numerous lunchtime and after-school clubs are well attended. Off-site residential activities help to reinforce pupils' social development whilst a well-planned personal, social and health programme ensures that pupils know how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum and adds variety and interest to lessons. Carefully selected adjustments to the curriculum in mathematics and in writing have effectively tailored learning more closely to the needs of all pupils and, in particular, higher achieving pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of these aspects is good and the school is rightly proud of its caring ethos, which has a positive impact on pupils' good personal development. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, and the school makes effective use of positive partnerships with parents and external agencies to support this work. Robust arrangements are in place to support vulnerable pupils, engage them in learning and reinforce positive behaviour. The school now uses an effective tracking system to identify the academic needs of individual pupils in writing and to provide them with good support, but the systems for mathematics and science are not so advanced. Teachers' day-to-day marking of pupils' work includes positive comments, but does not always show pupils how they can improve or what they need to learn next. Arrangements for ensuring health and safety and minimising risks are good, and child protection systems are suitably in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's good leadership has successfully created a hard-working, single-minded team, focussed on improvement and this is reflected in pupils' good achievement and personal development. The school's work to improve achievement in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in English, particularly in writing, is already showing clear signs of considerable success in terms of pupil achievement. It is early days and the school recognises that it has more work to do, particularly in tracking pupils' progress in mathematics and science in a consistent and accurate way, in order to raise standards and achievement still further.

Governors support the school well and play an active part in the strategic work of the school. School self-evaluation is accurate and effective. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning means that all staff are increasingly effective in making the school better. Although very new, the actions which have brought about improvements to date bode well for the future and indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	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

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?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lawrence C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Napton-on-the-Hill, CV47 8LU

We really enjoyed coming to your school the other day to find out how well you are doing. We think that you go to a good school and we know that you think that too because you and your parents and carers told us. We have also seen you enjoying yourselves in lessons, singing in assembly and playing outside.

We think that you are very polite, and have seen how very kind and helpful you are to each other and how well you work together in your groups, teams and clubs. You behave very well and we are pleased to see that you want to come to school as much as you can. Most of you make good progress in your work because the adults give you many interesting things to do and teach you well. They really care for you and help you if you are worried or upset.

They check how well you are learning in writing and we have asked the school to do this in mathematics and science so that they can find out exactly what you need to do in order to do even better in these subjects. We have also asked the school to make sure that teachers know the exact level of your learning. They can then use this information to give you work which is exactly right for you and is neither too easy nor too hard.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your hardest so that you become even more successful in the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Atcheson Lead inspector

Annex B



16 May 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Lawrence C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School,
Napton-on-the-Hill, CV47 8LU**

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Yours sincerely

Barbara Atcheson
Lead inspector