

St Lawrence Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120537
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339719
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Chambers
Headteacher	Mrs Marion Watson
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2007
School address	Lower Church Road Skellingthorpe Lincoln
Telephone number	01522 686689
Fax number	01522 686689
Email address	enquiries@st-lawrence.lincs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. About two thirds of the time was spent looking at learning. Twelve lessons or part lessons were observed and nine teachers were seen. Meetings were held with governors, staff and pupils and the results of staff and pupil surveys were analysed. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of meetings, policies and other documents. They also looked at pupils' work completed over the last six months and 46 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively assessment is used to meet pupils' needs
- how effectively teachers challenge pupils to achieve as well as they can
- middle managers' impact on driving improvements.

Information about the school

This is a small school. Almost all pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the number with statements of special educational needs is slightly above average, mostly for difficulties in the autistic spectrum. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Reception class taught alongside the Year 1 class. The school holds the Eco-schools bronze award and the Basic Skills quality award. A children's centre shares the site. It is run by other providers and was not included in this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Lawrence Primary is a satisfactory school. Its strength lies in its nurturing and Christian ethos. Parents and carers agree. A number of them praised what they refer to as the school's 'excellent, caring ethos'. All pupils are offered good levels of care, support and guidance, which are instrumental in helping them to learn and develop confidence, self-control and self-esteem. As a result, their personal skills are well developed.

Children receive a satisfactory start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although the frequent changes of key people in Reception means that the welfare arrangements are not robust. Inspection evidence shows that throughout the school, pupils' attainment is broadly average. Progress is satisfactory in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science, from starting points that are in line with expectation. In 2009, although attainment was broadly average overall, a small number of pupils made less progress than they should in reading, mathematics and science during their time in the school. The main reason lies in the quality of teaching. While this is satisfactory overall, it is inconsistent, leading to uneven progress. All lessons feature good relationships, effective behaviour management and the well-directed contribution of other adults assisting in the class. In some classes, assessment is not used fully so that sometimes teachers are not clear about what their pupils understand. This results in the occasional gap in pupils' understanding that teachers have missed, such as in mental arithmetic and mathematical calculation. These gaps can cause problems for pupils when they reach Year 6. In a few lessons, tasks are not suited well enough to some pupils' abilities and challenge is limited. In these cases, pupils' progress slows. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities at all ages make satisfactory progress overall. This includes those with difficulties in the autistic spectrum, because their needs are appropriately supported.

Pupils reap the benefits of thoughtful curricular planning that links subjects together and makes learning more meaningful. Pupils' imagination is inspired by the themed work. However, curriculum leadership is not fully developed because monitoring is not sufficiently formalised to ensure full coverage of literacy, numeracy and information and technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum.

Several factors indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. Senior leaders have identified accurate priorities to drive forward improvements. Additional staff training is underway to deal with the inconsistencies in management and teaching that hold pupils back. Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities appropriately and provide satisfactory governance. They have developed a programme of planned visits to help them become more effective in holding the school to account.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching throughout the school so that:
 - a higher proportion of pupils achieve the nationally expected levels and the higher levels, particularly in reading, mathematics and science
 - tasks are better matched to ability to extend learning for all groups in all lessons
 - teachers fully develop their skills in the use of assessment in the classroom.
 - Develop the skills of curriculum leaders so that formal monitoring of curricular content and quality ensures that pupils do not suffer any gaps in their learning.
 - Develop the range of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum.
 - Strengthen the welfare arrangements in the Reception class by providing consistency in the support of each child by a named key person.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In 2009, attainment was broadly average overall, although in English in Year 6, attainment lifted to above average. Inspection evidence shows that current attainment is in line with age-related expectations. Progress and achievement are satisfactory overall, whatever pupils' backgrounds, gender, abilities or ethnicity. Work based upon themes lead to creative writing that exhibits pupils' satisfactory writing skills on topics such as 'Storms'. Year 1 pupils are beginning to understand how to develop ideas in a sequence of sentences. Year 3 pupils use appropriate and interesting vocabulary to describe a stormy sea; and Year 6 writing is lively and thoughtful. However, learning sometimes slows when tasks do not provide enough challenge, especially in reading, mathematics and science.

Most pupils enjoy school, as shown by their above-average attendance. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed. This is a direct result of the ethos of care and consideration in the school. Pupils want to learn, they get on with each other and they behave well. They understand how exercise and nutrition play their part in helping them to lead healthy lifestyles. They told inspectors how carefully the school ensures that they feel safe and secure. They understand how to keep safe in a range of situations they might encounter in and outside school. Pupils are well aware of right and wrong. They routinely discuss ideas and reflect on what they are learning. As one pupil, typically, commented, 'My school is wonderful. The teachers are caring and nice.' Pupils' awareness, understanding of, and contribution to, the local community are good, and pupils are prepared for their future satisfactorily through their acquisition of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The average and satisfactory nature of outcomes in pupils' attainment, achievement and progress mirrors the current quality of teaching. A number of good lessons were seen, especially where the themed aspects of the curriculum were evident. Some teachers use assessment well to push learning on. In the best lessons seen, teachers asked probing questions which required pupils to draw conclusions and offer opinions. In weaker lessons, although satisfactory, assessment information was not used well, for instance to ensure understanding or provide challenge. Teachers' marking is sometimes good but examples of poor marking were evident, offering no information as to how a pupil might improve.

Themed work has increased the relevance and pupils' enjoyment of learning, but checking of content is not carried out thoroughly enough and opportunities to enhance basic skills throughout the curriculum are sometimes missed. For instance, limited use is made of ICT to support learning. A number of additional activities are available after school, although these are not offered throughout the year. Good aspects of the provision include work to achieve the Eco schools bronze award and a good programme

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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of personal, social and health education. This supports pupils' personal development and underpins the good levels of care, support and guidance offered. Several pupils, parents and carers reported that the pastoral care given by staff to all pupils is strong. Inspectors agree. This is cemented by suitable links with outside agencies to provide support to pupils when needed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders and governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders drive forward improvements satisfactorily because they analyse pupils' progress in detail so that support can be given to any who fall behind. However, curriculum leadership is inconsistent; the lack of formalised monitoring systems limits leaders' knowledge of what is going on in their area of responsibility. The governing body takes a keen interest in the school and checks its provision satisfactorily. Diligent safeguarding, well managed to ensure centralised records are up to date, makes a good contribution to pupils' welfare. The school has made significant gains in its good links with parents and carers. It extends these efforts successfully in the wider national and global community. The inclusive ethos of the school ensures equality of opportunity. Inclusion of those with additional needs is comprehensive and eliminates discrimination. Their needs and programmes are shared with parents and carers, an indication of the effective partnership that exists. The level of pupils' attainment and their rate of learning and progress confirm that the school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Given their starting points, the outcomes for children are satisfactory. By the time they start Year 1, most children have reached the standards expected of five-year-olds nationally and some have exceeded them, although attainment in communication, language and literacy remains relatively weak. Children are happy and enthusiastic learners. Progress in key skills and in the development of personal skills is satisfactory because staff are caring and pay attention to individual needs. Children enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks, such as putting away toys, and this helps them to develop skills for the future. Staff help children to learn and develop through a range of interesting activities outside and inside. During the inspection, children excitedly donned life jackets to set off in their cardboard boats in the 'stormy sea'. Children's needs are identified and provided for. They receive a balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. Activities are well supervised by adults and progress is carefully assessed. Children's welfare is carefully promoted but the frequent change of key people in Reception leads to a lack of continuity in the support for children's needs. Leadership is satisfactory and is focused on improvements, some of which have already made a positive impact on planning and resources and, consequently, on outcomes.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all of the responses to the parental questionnaire were supportive of the school and its work. Parents and carers rate very highly the way the school keeps their children safe and promotes healthy lifestyles. They say their children enjoy school very much. They are very pleased with the teaching and the way the school helps parents and carers to support their child's learning. A very small minority of parents and carers

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indicated a negative response to one or more questions. There were few comments added. A small number felt that the school does not deal with behaviour well enough, or meet their children's needs. A few indicated that the school does not help their children to make enough progress or take account of adults' suggestions. Inspectors investigated these parental concerns and found that pupils behaved well during the inspection. The school has appropriate systems for dealing with different needs and to help pupils to make progress. Records confirm that the progress of the majority is satisfactory. The inspectors found no evidence that parents' and carers' suggestions are not carefully considered.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Lawrence Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	63	16	35	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	52	20	43	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	59	15	33	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	50	22	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	46	24	52	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	43	25	54	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	35	24	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	52	18	39	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	35	25	54	1	2	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	33	24	52	5	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	41	22	48	3	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	54	21	46	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, Lincoln, LN6 5UZ

Thank you for your lovely warm welcome and help when we came to inspect your school recently. The tour guides gave us a super start to getting to know what you think of your school and what life is like at St Lawrence.

I can tell you that the school is satisfactory. That means some things are fine and some things could be better. As I am sure you know, some things are improving. You told us that your school leaders make sure you are safe and take good care of you. Most of you thoroughly enjoy being at school. Your parents and carers agree.

Standards in reading, mathematics and science are not as high as in writing but they are about the same as most children in the country. In class, you do not always have hard enough tasks to do. We would like to see your teachers find more ways to include more of the basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects, and this would help you to learn. We have also asked the school to strengthen the welfare arrangements in the Reception class so that each child has the same key person. Teachers can help you to do better by using the information they have about your progress to give you tasks that make you think a bit harder. They can also help by making sure you have no gaps in the knowledge you should have by the time you reach Year 6. That will make it easier to meet the challenges when you move on to your next schools. You can help by listening to your teachers and working as hard as you can.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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