

St Lawrence Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124951
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359804
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Cambell
Headteacher	David Gibbs
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
School address	Lower Road Leatherhead KT24 5JP
Telephone number	01372 452870
Fax number	01372 451241
Email address	headmail@stlawrence-primary.surrey.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, observed seven teachers and held meetings with members of the governing, staff and a group of pupils, and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the 90 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- To what extent are higher expectations increasing the level of challenge and lifting the rate of progress?
- How far improved assessment procedures and detailed planning are raising achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- How much have developments to assessment procedures improved monitoring and extended the accountability of staff and governors?
- To what extent are the senior leadership team, and the governing body, influencing the school's direction and performance?

Information about the school

St Lawrence is smaller than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from families of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well above average. These pupils' needs include speech, language and communication, and behavioural, emotional and social needs. The proportion of pupils who arrive or leave part-way through their primary school education is above that found in most other schools.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into a Reception class. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to staffing throughout the school and facilities have been developed.

The school has achieved National Healthy School status and it is a member of a learning partnership, which includes 11 schools.

Pupils in Year 6 were on a school trip during the first day of this two-day 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

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of good features which include the care and support it provides. The school is successful in enhancing pupils' self-esteem and developing their confidence and strengthening their personal qualities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They also have a good understanding of keeping safe and have a keen interest in learning about others. Their enjoyment of learning is reflected in the enthusiastic response to creative and sporting opportunities. This picture is reflected in the questionnaires completed by pupils where they indicated that they really enjoy school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent's comment sums up the views of others: 'I very much like the fact that, as a small school, there is a very positive, inclusive, community feel among the pupils and staff.'

Now that the school is passing through a more settled stage, it is soundly placed to focus on lifting performance levels. Monitoring and tracking systems have been introduced and, as a consequence, the governing body and school leaders have a clear understanding of where the school is now and what needs improving. However, the school recognises that the pace at which improvements are being made is not yet quick enough. Monitoring procedures are not yet sufficiently rigorous and detailed assessment information is not used consistently to guide school planning. Nevertheless, the school's awareness and vision are informed by an increasingly accurate self-evaluation and the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Children in Reception are cherished from the start and benefit from the caring and supportive environment. However, the school recognises it has more to do to improve the satisfactory provision. Improvements include the way the provision is managed and planning a better balance of purposeful and challenging learning opportunities. These include activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves.

Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Attainment is rising and larger proportions of pupils reached the higher levels in the most recent national assessments and tests for pupils in Year 6. The push for consistently good teaching is evident in the review of classroom practice. As a result, the quality of teaching is steadily improving and is reflected in pupils' progress, which is sometimes good. Pupils are progressing well in lessons that are effectively managed and include interesting activities that capture their imagination and hold their attention. However, information from assessment is not always used as well as it could be to help match activities to pupils' differing needs and to ensure that the pace of learning is always quick enough, particularly for those who learn quickly. Intervention work is appropriately supporting individual and/or different groups of pupils.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that at least 80% is good or better, by July 2011, by ensuring staff always:
 - use assessment information to adapt lesson content in response to pupils' differing needs
 - provide challenging tasks that are well paced and pitched at the right level, especially for the more able.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that school leaders:
 - monitor the work of the school more systematically
 - check on pupils' academic and personal outcomes more frequently
 - use assessment information more effectively to guide whole school planning.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - clarifying the role of leaders
 - ensuring that planned activities are always matched to the children's ability with the help of detailed assessment information
 - providing a well-constructed balance between those activities directed by the teacher and those which children choose for themselves.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen in their eagerness to become involved in stimulating and well-paced activities in English and mathematics, is a characteristic of most lessons. They work well in small groups and readily share information, showing a determination to get the tasks right. Pupils work well independently, for example when working in pairs and small groups in preparation for their writing of biographies about famous ancient Greeks. Pupils were enthralled by a story that led them to share their feelings. Pupils also showed great satisfaction in completing graphs and charts, for example during mathematics.

Attainment is broadly average from expected starting points in Reception and all groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily. The decline in performance between 2007 and 2009 has been addressed. School data show that levels of attainment and the rate of progress are improving, especially in reading and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics. Consequently, pupils currently in Year 6 are reaching higher levels of attainment than last year's cohort. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who join the school part-way through their education, or by the very small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils say they like coming to school because they enjoy making friends, learn lots of things and thoroughly enjoy participating in the sporting activities. Pupils show much interest and respect for different people's feelings, in their involvement in community projects, for example. Pupils' excellent understanding of living healthily is evident in the way they talk confidently about the importance of eating different kinds of food and drinking fluids. The majority of pupils take part in regular exercise and participate in community sports events. Pupils are respectful and value each other's views, but have a limited knowledge of communities in other parts of this country. The school council

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provides good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and to make decisions including the way the playground should be used at break times, for example.

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	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships, clear learning intentions and questioning that probes pupils' understanding are particular strengths of teaching. Topics such as those that encourage imaginative writing and make links between the different subjects, successfully capture pupils' interest and hold their attention. As a result, pupils become interested in their learning and want to find out more for themselves. However, the pace of learning is not always as rapid as it could be and some activities do not expect enough from pupils, especially the more able. Assessment is not used consistently to guide planning, which means that tasks are not always matched well enough to the needs of different abilities and marking does not always help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. As a result, the pupils do not always learn as well as they should.

Attractive and informative displays give an insight into the range of pupils' learning experiences. The curriculum successfully links different subjects and gives pupils opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop their skills through topics which often explore the school's locality and its history. Skills, including the ability to work collaboratively, are encouraged. The teaching of French, and Latin for the most able, adds additional positive dimensions. However, the school has rightly started to review the

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curriculum with a focus on improving pupils' writing skills. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by a number of popular clubs, residential trips, visits to places of interest and the use of subject specialists.

The quality of pastoral care is recognised and much valued by parents and carers. One parent's comments sum up the views of others: 'Both my children have thrived in the environment and, as a result, have an enthusiasm for learning while becoming balanced and considerate individuals.' The close attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected in the numerous opportunities for physical activity and the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are successfully compiled for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, covering a wide range of personal and learning needs. Individual achievement is managed through improved tracking of pupils' attainment and progress. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies and tailored individual attention enables those with the greatest needs, including some of those who join part-way through the school year, to gain confidence and self-esteem and to be successful learners.

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?

The leadership and management of the school are successfully embedding ambition and driving improvement. Following an unsettled period that included changes to staffing and disruptions owing to building work, the focus on key priorities for sustained improvement has sharpened. These changes are matched by a greater awareness of the path the school needs to follow to increase the pace of learning throughout the school. The leadership team, well supported by staff, is creating a culture that is committed not only to strengthening each pupil's self-esteem, but also to raising their achievement. Secure systems have been established to ensure that this ethos is maintained even through staff changes. Improvements are already evident with more rapid progress in some subjects. However, the rate at which improvement is taking place is not quick enough. The wide range of information from assessment and monitoring is not used well enough to ensure that the rate of progress is as brisk as it could be when measured against the school's priorities. The promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are satisfactory. As a result, groups of pupils make similar progress, although some pupils, especially the more able, could make faster progress in some classes.

The governing body is supportive and members are visible in the school. The work of the governing body shows that members are fully involved in the strategic management of the school. Although they hold the school to account for its work, they are not yet sufficiently

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involved in checking on the school's progress with regard to lifting achievement and raising attainment levels. Detailed and well-organised procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are carefully followed. The school uses embedded and reliable quality assurance and risk assessment systems.

Local services and agencies are used effectively to enhance the well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school demonstrates a good understanding of local needs and challenges. It makes effective use of resources that are available within the learning partnership. The school provides a number of opportunities for pupils to gain a good understanding of people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the world. However, there are limited opportunities to promote community cohesion at the national level. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and play an active part in school events, including reading projects and working collaboratively with pupils on the school council.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly, are eager to learn and make satisfactory progress. Strong links have been established with parents and carers. Caring staff have successfully established a welcoming environment in which children are nurtured from the start. Assessment procedures are beginning to ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. However, the school recognises that it still has more to do to ensure this information is used consistently to guide planning for all activities. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who are more vulnerable, is appropriately focused.

Children listen attentively and chatter enthusiastically about their work. The school makes effective use of both the indoor and outside areas. However, in its planning, the school

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has already identified the need to develop the outside area into a more stimulating learning environment. Children happily move from one activity to another. Questioning is often used well to probe their understanding and capture their interest. Themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on early reading, writing and number skills.

The provision is satisfactorily managed. However, its effectiveness is inhibited by the lack of clarity of the roles undertaken by different staff that manage different aspects of the provision, including monitoring and the use of assessment.

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

An above-average proportion of the school's parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Almost all of the responses were very positive. A number of parents made written comments and almost all of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included positive remarks about the caring and supportive environment, the quality of the staff, the range of learning experiences and the way the school engages parents in its work. However, a very few questionnaires recorded reservations over a small number of issues. These included the amount of progress their children are making. The inspection found evidence to indicate that pupils are making more rapid progress than they did before, although those who are more able could be challenged more.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Lawrence 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	76	21	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	80	18	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	66	31	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	69	25	28	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	64	71	23	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	68	26	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	78	20	22	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)	63	70	19	21	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	69	23	26	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	58	31	34	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	64	26	29	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	71	79	19	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	80	15	17	1	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lawrence Primary Primary School, Leatherhead KT24 5JP

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Yours is a satisfactory school where you are safe and benefit from good care and support. You told us it is also a place where you want to be, make friends, and thoroughly enjoy taking part in the many exciting activities, stimulating trips and interesting clubs. The overwhelming majority of your parents expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

- You make satisfactory progress in lessons, and your achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 6.
- You respond enthusiastically to activities that encourage you to think creatively.
- You make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute successfully to local events.
- You have an outstanding understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- help you to make faster progress, especially those of you who learn quickly, by giving you more challenging activities in lessons
- help those of you in Reception to learn more quickly by always getting you involved in a wider range of stimulating activities
- ensure that those in charge of the school keep an even closer eye on how you are doing.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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