

St Lucia's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123508
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	380676
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2011
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Jarvis
Headteacher	Tom Brookes
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2007
School address	Upton Magna Shrewsbury Shropshire SY4 4TZ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed nine lessons taught by five teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 85 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are children making sufficient progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- How successfully has the apparent decline in standards of writing been addressed?
- To what extent are the school's leaders taking account of pupils' progress when evaluating the quality of provision?
- How well does the school meet the needs of the small groups of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are learning to speak English as an additional language and those who are eligible for free school meals?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies from year to year. Currently the proportion supported by the school is below average. The proportion additionally supported by external professionals is average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The very large majority of pupils come from a White British background. A very small number come from a minority ethnic background, some of whom are learning to speak English for the first time.

There have been a number of staff changes since the school was last inspected. A new permanent headteacher took up post in April 2011 after serving as acting headteacher since September 2010. The post of deputy headteacher, which became vacant in July 2010, has not been filled. The school also suffered the sad loss of an influential member of the governing body in November 2010, who was leading the school's developments in information and communication technology. Two other influential members of the governing body have recently resigned. One member of staff is currently away from school owing to long-term illness.

The school provides a breakfast club each morning which is managed by the governing body. The site is shared with St Lucia's Pre-School. This is not managed by the governing body and subject to a separate 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

The school provides a satisfactory education. Attainment by the end of Year 6 varies from year to year, as cohorts are small, but is usually above average. Pupils make steady progress in all year groups and subjects as a result of satisfactory teaching. Teachers assess pupils accurately, but the results are not always used well enough when planning the next lesson. Tasks are adequately matched to the abilities of groups of pupils, but do not always provide enough challenge to accelerate their progress. This is particularly true for the most-able pupils. The curriculum provides a good range of stimulating and exciting topics, but these are rarely planned to include opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learnt in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology lessons.

The school provides good-quality pastoral care. All aspects of pupils' personal development are at least good. Some are outstanding. Pupils are polite, well-behaved and helpful. They have an exceptionally good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, especially when using computers. Pupils have total confidence in the staff to take good care of them and all have someone to talk to. They feel particularly safe from bullying and any form of intimidation. Parents and carers strongly agree with the views of their children. Pupils play an outstanding role in the school and wider community. They are quick to volunteer for roles of responsibility in school and further afield. Pupils have planted bulbs in the churchyard and organised a street party for the village. Their drama production has been taken on tour to other schools. However, the most impressive aspect has been the partnership with a National Trust property which has seen pupils take over part of the property and develop it for other schools to use.

The various staffing changes and other difficulties have taken their toll and achievement is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. However, the decline, especially in writing, has been halted and progress is starting to improve again, especially in mathematics. Other strengths, such as high levels of attendance, have been maintained. The headteacher has identified appropriate priorities for development and actions to address them have been largely successful. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. The evaluation of teaching relies on the results of lesson observations which do not give a complete picture of its effectiveness in promoting pupils' progress over time. This is because these observations are not supplemented enough by other activities such as examining pupils' books and analysing data to identify the progress pupils are making over, for example, a term or the year. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make better use across the school of information from assessments to accurately match tasks to pupils' abilities and provide greater challenge for the most able.
- Provide more planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills in other subjects.
- Use a wider range of monitoring activities to evaluate the school's provision and outcomes with greater accuracy.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment on starting Year 1 varies from year to year, but last year was average. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been above average in the past, but was average in 2011. Current attainment in Year 2 is also average and pupils are now making satisfactory progress. The current attainment in Year 6 is above average. This represents satisfactory progress given these pupils' above average attainment on starting Key Stage 2. Progress is satisfactory for all groups, and for individuals who speak English as an additional language or who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given work that matches their particular requirements and their academic progress is satisfactory. However, the good guidance and clear boundaries they receive helps those with emotional and social difficulties to make good progress in their personal development.

Learning is satisfactory in lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. Most listen carefully to their teacher and concentrate on their tasks. They enjoy tackling problems in mathematics and getting a right answer, such as when converting fractions from one form to another. Pupils always do as they are told, although some of the youngest pupils allow their concentration to wander when the work is too easy for them. Older pupils sometimes continue working, rather than listening to the teacher, when they know that they can get on by themselves and do not need any extra support.

Pupils get on well together. They demonstrate a good degree of self-confidence and independence. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and put this into practice when discussing issues such as behaviour towards others. They have a good

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understanding of the other cultures represented in Great Britain and of the major world faiths. Pupils care about others less fortunate than themselves, and are keen to do something about it through their very successful fund-raising. In assemblies pupils are quietly reflective and thoughtful. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are active.

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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use their good subject knowledge to engage and enthuse pupils in the way that they present lessons. In Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils' were excited to hear about a new book by their favourite author after reading the front and back covers. However, they were shocked to find the story was missing and set about writing it themselves. Pupils are split into three groups for most lessons with different work given to each group according to their ability. Sometimes, however, the differences between the tasks do not reflect the difference in ability between the groups. In one lesson, for example, the only extra challenge for the highest attainers was to use speech marks, which missed the opportunity to extend the content of their writing. Lower attainers, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are sometimes given too much help by teaching assistants when they could be doing the tasks themselves. Behaviour is consistently well managed. Teachers are quick to remind any pupil not paying full attention and the need for any further discipline is very rare indeed.

Long-term plans for the curriculum ensure that the school meets all requirements

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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and that pupils are provided with topics they find enjoyable and stimulating. Medium-term plans are being developed, but at present they lack detail about how work is to be set for differing abilities or provide opportunities to practise skills such as literacy and numeracy. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is well planned to promote pupils' personal development. It includes a wide range of visits and visitors. The most influential of these is the unique partnership with the National Trust that has allowed the whole school to place much of its science, history and community curriculum in a 'real-life' context. The school provides a welcoming environment. All staff have a good knowledge of each pupil as an individual. Pupils' personal needs are met well including through using specialist outside support when necessary, such as for individuals who are learning English for the first time.

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 headteacher provides a satisfactory vision for the school. His drive for improvement is shared by the large majority of staff. Accurate and up-to-date data on pupils' progress is used well to identify trends in performance and to set appropriately challenging targets for improvement. Data are used appropriately to ensure equality and to check that there are no gaps in performance between different groups. The curriculum places an appropriate emphasis on challenging discrimination. Plans to address priorities are proving successful, especially in improving progress in writing, but sometimes focus on improving the curriculum rather than raising the quality of teaching. Checks on teaching in lessons are accurate, but are not combined with other forms of monitoring to gain a complete picture of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning over time.

Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through their roles that link them with different subjects. They are effective in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. The governing body has been less effective in developing its engagement with parents. It established a parents' forum last year to provide parents and carers with the opportunity to air their views. This has not been entirely successful as it has proved difficult for some parents to utilise. Nevertheless, the school provides good-quality information each week on the work of the school and the large majority of parents and carers are happy with the education their children receive. As well as the strong links with the local community, the school has a productive partnership with an inner city school that supports its good work in

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promoting community cohesion. Pupils learn about the differences in lifestyles from their pen pals, and how their different religions affect their everyday lives.

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	3
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	3
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

Children’s knowledge and skills on joining the Reception class are usually typical for their age. Children make satisfactory progress in their learning. Progress is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and in children’s personal development. Children are generally well behaved, although some struggle to maintain their concentration when working as a class, rather than a smaller group. They play happily together and share toys. Progress is good in some areas of learning. For example, the many practical activities promote children’s creative development well. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is considerably enhanced through the partnership with the National Trust. The indoor classroom provides a stimulating learning environment. Children move freely to the outside, but this area provides them with fewer stimuli to develop their language skills. Assessments are accurate, but a comprehensive picture of each child’s attainment is not developed quickly enough at the start of the year to allow work to be precisely matched to their needs, particularly for more-able children.

The school meets all welfare requirements and children are well cared for. Good attention is paid to ensuring they are safe and happy in school. Each is known well as an individual by all staff. The leader makes good use of data to identify trends in performance, but this is not closely linked to the identification of priorities for improvement, especially in teaching.

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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

A relatively high proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The large majority are happy with the education provided by the school and hold views that are similar to the inspection findings. Parents and carers particularly praised the quality of pastoral care. Some raised concerns about a lack of challenge for more-able pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that these pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to ensure that they make good progress. Some parents raised issues about the effectiveness of leadership and management with respect to aspects of communication such as information on their children's progress. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers, analysed a sample of pupils' reports and held discussions with the school's leaders, including members of the governing body. Inspectors found that reports were very informative about what pupils know, understand and can do, but do not always provide sufficient information on the progress they have made or the actual levels they have reached. Inspectors also found that the school's leaders were not gaining a full picture of parents' and carers' views because the parents' forum was not enabling all parents and carers to have their voices heard.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Lucia's CofE 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 103 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	59	33	39	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	60	29	34	5	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	35	45	53	6	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	41	39	46	4	5	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	39	46	36	42	4	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	36	42	49	6	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	41	46	54	2	2	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)	29	34	45	53	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	41	44	52	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	35	46	54	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	31	45	53	4	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	22	26	43	51	9	11	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	45	41	48	5	6	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



7 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lucia's CofE Primary School, Shropshire, SY4 4TZ

Thank you for the help that you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be friendly, polite and well-behaved. You told us how exceptionally safe you feel at school, and particularly that there was no bullying. This is because your teachers take good care of you and make sure that you have someone to turn to with any problems. You all know that it is wrong to be nasty towards others, so you don't do it. Well done! We were very impressed by all the excellent work you do in the community, such as planning the street party and taking your production to other schools. The work that you do at Attingham Park is truly amazing.

We found that you are getting a satisfactory education. You make steady progress in your learning, but sometimes the work is a bit too easy for some of you. We have asked your teachers to always give you tasks that you can succeed at if you really work hard. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to practise your writing, mathematics and computer skills in other subjects. You told us that you like the different topics that you study and you were excited by the ways in which some of them were presented. You clearly enjoy coming to school because your attendance is excellent.

Your headteacher knows what needs to be improved in order for you to get a better education. He checks the teaching in lessons to make sure that it is good enough, but we have asked him to check some other things as well, such as your books. This will help the school to improve more quickly.

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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