

St Lawrence Primary School

Lower Road, Effingham, Leatherhead, KT24 5JP

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good enough – some pupils, particularly the most able, do not make the progress expected because activities in lessons do not always provide sufficient challenge.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because lessons are too often based on the activity which pupils are going to do rather than on what they are going to learn. Instead of thinking about the purpose of learning, pupils sometimes just focus on completing tasks.
- Pupils are not making as good progress in mathematics and writing as they do in reading.
- Leaders and managers monitor the quality of teaching in lessons but this has not been sufficiently effective to ensure that teaching helps pupils make consistently good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children enjoy being at school. It is a very caring and harmonious community where children say they feel safe. As a result, pupils behave well and attend regularly.
- Pupils learn to read very well. The focus on reading throughout the school, particularly early reading, has made sure that pupils progress very well in reading and attainment is above average.
- A sharper focus on school improvement through the work of newly-formed committees has ensured that the school is provided with a good level of challenge and support by the strengthened governing body which is bringing about improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The senior management has responded to past dips in performance with firm actions so the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons. Almost all were jointly observed by the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Pupils throughout the school were heard to read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and with the school's middle and senior leaders. Two telephone calls were made to a representative from the local authority to discuss the range and impact of support provided for the school.
- The inspector took account of the 52 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, the views of parents and carers who spoke to inspectors during the inspection and those who completed the school's most recent parent survey.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including information about how well children progressed, self-evaluation and school improvement documentation, planning, monitoring and assessment information, performance management documentation and school policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Lawrence's is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in single-aged classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average. The proportion supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support form pupil premium funding is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been a number of staff changes and new appointments since the last inspection including the re-organisation of leadership and management. A substantive deputy headteacher role was implemented from September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, by ensuring that leaders and managers monitor teaching more effectively to see that teachers:
 - make pupils aware of what they are going to be learning during lessons rather than what they are going to do
 - introduce the variety of activities planned for different groups earlier in mathematics and literacy lessons so that individual pupils are challenged to make better progress more quickly
 - have more opportunities to share the good practice that exists within the school.
- By July 2013, accelerate all pupils' progress, and to raise the attainment, particularly of more able pupils, in mathematics and writing:
 - ensure lessons develop a sharper focus to the matching of activities to pupils' next steps in learning so their learning accelerates further
 - ensure pupils have the basic skills and knowledge to support their mental and written calculations
 - improve the teaching of basic literacy skills in order to strengthen pupils' use and application of punctuation and grammar in their writing
 - make sure activities provide the right level of challenge particularly for more able pupils
 - carry out rigorous monitoring that ensures pupils' progress in mathematics and writing is at least at the expected level year on year.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the school with a range of abilities, but they are broadly at the levels expected nationally for their age. The current Reception children have only been in school for a very short time. However, they are already able independently to choose different activities and play together confidently in the outside area. They express themselves clearly and enjoy their learning.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 shows a trend of improvement and is currently above average. Whilst attainment in reading is stronger throughout the school than in writing and mathematics, pupils' writing and mathematics skills are improving. Pupils in Years 6, for example, made good progress in developing good use of numeracy competencies by analysing number patterns and their properties to solve problems.
- Less able readers who have just moved into Year 1 are able to use their knowledge of the sounds of letters to read simple words. Those who have just moved into Year 2 persevere well with reading, with many already reading above expectations for the time of the year. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs read with determination and growing confidence.
- For some time, pupils' progress between Years 2 and 6 has been in line with, or just below, national expectations in mathematics and writing. Progress in reading is much stronger. However, the overall progress of pupils, particularly the most able, is not yet strong enough to be able to judge achievement as good. The school's tracking shows that most pupils in Year 6 who have just left the school made broadly expected progress in both English and mathematics. However, the records also indicate that learning dipped recently for a few pupils who are currently at the top end of Key Stage 2. These pupils are now rapidly making up any lost ground and benefiting from the strength of teaching particularly in Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils because of the amendments to activities and the tailored support provided.
- The small number of pupils who are provided with additional support through the pupil premium are given extra support to help with literacy and numeracy skills. The school's records show that this has led to improvements in their rate of progress particularly in reading.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although effective practice was evident in a number of lessons seen, it is not firmly embedded across the school because good practice is not always shared widely. In some lessons where teaching is less than good, activities are not closely enough matched to pupils' next steps in learning, pupils are not fully engaged in all parts of the lesson and there is insufficient challenge, particularly for the most able.
- In some of the other less successful lessons, there are occasional issues of slow pace. Too long is spent explaining what pupils should do rather than developing what they are learning.
- In almost all lessons relationships are good. Children enjoy learning and have positive attitudes.
- Where learning is most effective, the pace of the lesson is brisk and assessment, which has improved since the last inspection, is used well to match work closely to pupils' needs and establish what will engage their interest most successfully. In these lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This was seen in a good literacy lesson where older pupils enthusiastically developed descriptive words and phrases in order to enhance their descriptive writing. The teacher's very enthusiastic approach, coupled with very carefully planned activities to extend pupils' understanding of the impact of different words and phrases, inspired pupils in their writing. As one pupil said, 'My teacher has high expectations of what we can do; our writing today has been awe inspiring.'
- The school's records show that expectations in some lessons have not always been high enough,

particularly in Key Stage 2 to promote good achievement. As a result, some pupils make different rates of progress across different year groups.

- Across the school, activities take place in a positive learning environment. Pupils are confident that their views and ideas will be valued. Strategies for setting clear expectations with regard to behaviour, in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination are firmly established.
- Pupils in the Reception class enjoy learning from a wide range of fun and interesting activities. A well-planned induction programme has ensured that children are well prepared for school and settle quickly. As a result they are able, even within a few days, to sustain attention reasonably well.
- Teaching demonstrates secure subject knowledge. The systematic teaching of reading throughout the school, particularly the focus on early reading has helped pupils make good gains in learning to read over time. However, opportunities to develop basic numeracy skills, such as in understanding place value and using operations to make calculations, and improving pupils' use of punctuation and grammar in writing remain limited.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils say that this is typical. Most pupils engage readily in their learning and say that they enjoy school. Pupils report that lessons are hardly ever disrupted by any poor behaviour. There are very few recorded incidents of inappropriate behaviour and significant disruption of lessons is rare. Where these occur they are managed effectively. Pupils feel very confident in the adults around them.
- Pupils' natural courtesy and exemplary manners throughout the inspection were appreciated by the inspection team.
- Pupils say they feel safe and well supported. The very positive ethos in the school is evident. Parents and carers comment, for example, that they have found the school to be a very friendly place and that they feel well supported. Most parents and carers who expressed a view feel that behaviour is good.
- The behaviour logs provided by the school indicate that there are very few incidents of unkindness and that these are uncommon. Pupils confirm that any bullying is rare and quickly dealt with by staff in the school. They are aware of the different forms of bullying.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of risk, supported well by the school's input on personal and internet safety. Good provision in the breakfast club successfully ensures pupils' safety and well-being.
- Attendance is regular; it is above the national average.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding because there are a few pupils who do not fully engage in their learning and this negatively affects aspects of progress.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because they have not yet led to securely good teaching and clear and consistent acceleration of pupils' progress.
- Improvement plans are securely based on an analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Changes made to improve the quality of writing and in mathematics are leading to improvement. However, implementation has not been fully effective. There remains more to be done, particularly in improving the quality of teaching through the sharing of good practice, raising expectations and in ensuring that learning activities provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able.
- The local authority has provided good wide-ranging support to the school, including monitoring and evaluating the school's work which has strengthened leadership and management.

- The headteacher has the support of staff to improve the quality of provision.
 - The school's records of the monitoring of teaching show that strengths and weaknesses are assessed and shared with staff. The management of performance is given priority by the headteacher and the governing body. This process is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, although more needs to be done to ensure teaching is consistently good or better across the school so that all pupils have equality of opportunity in their learning. Suitable training broadens teachers' skills and strengthens their practice.
 - Senior leaders monitor the progress of different groups in the school through lesson observations, the use of data and by sampling pupils' work. These activities have been used to hold staff to account for the progress made by the pupils in different classes. Evaluation includes an analysis of the impact of the pupil premium funding.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well by the curriculum. It is well organised and enriched by a broad range of activities such as visits, residential trips, musical performances, clubs and experiences, such as the Year 2 overnight 'sleepover'. These support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their academic work. More remains to be done, especially in providing the right level of challenge in mathematics and the writing curriculum to increase improvement to the same level as that in reading. The school demonstrates the capacity to continue to improve.
 - All parents and carers who completed the online 'Parent View' questionnaire indicated that they would recommend the school to others.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - the work of the governing body has been strengthened since the last inspection
 - the development of new committees focused on school improvement issues and pupils' achievement has sharpened governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses; there is a clearer understanding of achievement and progress data and what needs to be done to secure further improvement. However, the full impact of the work has yet to be realised
 - there are rigorous procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment, which meet statutory requirements, including careful checks on adults and a planned approach to managing the safety of pupils.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124951
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	406282

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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louisa Winter
Headteacher	David Gibbs
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 November 2012
Telephone number	01372 452870
Fax number	01372 451241
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