

# St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104372
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	286923
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barbara Crane

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Espin-Bradley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Grennan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2002
<b>School address</b>	Goldthorn Road Blakenhall Wolverhampton WV2 4PJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 556434
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558992

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school operates on a split site, with three-quarters of a mile between its buildings. The proportion of families entitled to free school meals is high. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups. Children's attainment when they start school is well below average. Almost three-quarters of pupils are learning English as an additional language. This has risen since the school's previous inspection. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. An acting headteacher has been in place since September 2005 and has just been appointed as the permanent headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are below average by the time pupils leave the school. Some groups make faster progress than others, but most pupils make uneven progress between starting in the Nursery and leaving in Year 6. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It gives them a reasonable start to their education and a good boost to their social and emotional development. Teaching in the rest of the school is also satisfactory. However teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement vary and not all set challenging enough targets for pupils or give pupils sufficient guidance about what they need to do to move forward. Progress is speedier in Years 2 and 6 because it is here that teaching meets pupils' different needs more effectively and adapts work to their capabilities. In other years, there is an inconsistent level of challenge for more able pupils. Additionally, the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are not always pinpointed and catered for as well as they should be in teachers' planning. These factors restrict pupils' progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language make more consistent progress than others because teaching meets their needs more successfully, right across the school.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a good range of extra activities. However, children in the Foundation Stage do not have enough opportunities to follow their interests and make choices about their work and play. The care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory. The staff know pupils well and take good care of them on a day-to-day basis. Target setting and guidance to enable pupils to do their best in their work are weaker and limit pupils' progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Sound self-evaluation means that the school knows what it needs to work on next.

There are some strengths in the school which are helping it to improve. Pupils from all ethnic groups and backgrounds get on well together and their personal development and well-being are good. They have a good understanding of how to stay healthy, fit and how to keep safe. The school's good partnership with parents supports pupils' well-being. Parents appreciate the opportunities to help their children learn at home. The school's partnership with other schools in sport provides a wide range of activities that pupils greatly enjoy. The school has weathered a difficult time of uncertainty over its leadership and management and the decline in pupils' achievement in recent years has been halted. This pays testimony to the headteacher's determination to bring about improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement and raise standards by ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils, that targets are at the right level for pupils and that there is more effective guidance for pupils to meet them.
- Ensure that planning to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities promotes their progress more consistently.
- In the Foundation Stage improve the balance in activities that adults direct and those which children choose for themselves.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

The trend is of gradual improvement and the previously widespread underachievement, seen in pupils' progress records, has all but been eradicated. Children in the Foundation Stage make

satisfactory progress, even though their attainment remains well below the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception Year. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because teaching supports this aspect of their development more successfully. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' attainment is below average. Nonetheless, given their very low starting points, their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make better progress than other groups because of more consistent support and focused teaching. The rate of progress made by more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities lags behind. These pupils make inconsistent progress across the school because their needs are not as well catered for. Pupils' progress speeds up in Years 2 and 6. This is because of greater consistency in the use that teachers make of assessments to match work to pupils' different abilities in these year groups.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The happy atmosphere in the school springs from the pupils' good relationships. One pupil's assertion that 'we will make friends with anyone', reflects pupils' willingness to quickly befriend any newcomers. They are proud of the way in which they work and play together, regardless of ethnicity or cultural background. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that their top priority is 'to do our best'. Behaviour is good and pupils have a strong sense of fair play. Attendance is satisfactory and shows a steady rise as a result of the school's initiatives to bring about improvement. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils trained as junior road safety officers take their roles seriously. Pupils have good attitudes to keeping healthy and fit and take advantage of the healthy food on offer as well as the opportunities for keeping active through sport. They contribute to recycling projects in the wider community. The school council gathers pupils' views and affects what happens. For example, at pupils' suggestion, events are included at the end of topics to celebrate pupils' learning. Pupils' good levels of confidence and self-esteem equip them well for the future and but their progress in their work is not as robust as in their personal development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Good relationships between staff and children grow from the Nursery onwards. Pupils respond well to the teachers' encouraging and friendly manner and so they pay attention and want to learn. Teachers consistently extend pupils' vocabulary and check their understanding of new words. This goes a long way to ensure the consistent rate of learning for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. High expectations of pupils' behaviour are nearly always apparent. However, there is inconsistency in the use of assessments to ensure sufficient challenge and a precise match of learning task to individual pupils' needs. This affects the rate of learning for more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers' guidance through marking does not always help pupils to understand how well they are moving towards their targets and how to improve their work. The most consistent teaching in all of these respects is in Year 2 and Year 6 and so pupils' learning speeds up in these years. The effectiveness of the support provided for pupils by teaching assistants is sometimes diminished because they are not always sure what to do. All teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to capture pupils' interest and engage them in learning. There is a

consistent focus for all ages on getting pupils to explain their thinking in solving problems and this has boosted pupils' learning in mental mathematics.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The good range of extra activities is greatly enjoyed by pupils and the take-up of clubs is high. There is good support for pupils' understanding of how to keep safe, fit and healthy. The partnership with other schools in sports means that there is much that pupils can take part in competitively and recreationally. Older pupils relish learning French and Spanish. In spite of these notable strengths, the curriculum for all ages is not sufficiently well adapted for pupils of different abilities. There is some good planning for pupils to use their literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum, but this is not the case in numeracy. The Foundation Stage curriculum does not have enough opportunities for children to select their own activities to follow their interests because adults too often direct children to what they should do.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The good level of daily care means that pupils feel secure and parents are confident that their children are well looked after. Good procedures are in place to safeguard pupils. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory but is not sufficiently consistent in quality to promote their good progress. The identification of pupils' learning needs and the individual planning for pupils are not entirely secure. Adults are good at helping pupils to overcome everyday problems and are mindful of the support that individuals need to raise self-esteem. The academic guidance for pupils is weaker than that for their personal development. The system for setting targets for pupils is not yet fully secure in reflecting what they need to do next to do their best.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school knows what it needs to do to continue the pattern of improvement through its satisfactory self-evaluation. There is satisfactory capacity to improve, reflected in the steady rate of improvement in pupils' progress over the past three years. Much of this success is due to the headteacher's good leadership during an uncertain time. The staff are cheerful and committed to bringing about change for the better. Leadership and management put energy into creating a happy atmosphere and building pupils' personal development but not all measures are in place to ensure consistency in teaching and pupils' good progress. There has been some success in driving through initiatives to help the school to pinpoint where pupils are making slower progress. Improving the analysis of data has put the school in a stronger position to identify where groups and individual pupils are falling behind. The professional development of staff is tied into the school's priorities. Much has been successful. For example, staff training in how to boost pupils' achievement in mental mathematics and reading has paid dividends in raising pupils' performance in these areas. The most senior managers have worked hard to introduce the system for setting targets for pupils but there is still work to do in ensuring consistency in the way that targets are impacting on pupils' achievement. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a suitable action plan to extend their role in becoming more effective critical friends.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Bromley Street, Blakenhall, Wolverhampton, WV2 3AS

Thank you for helping us with our work when we visited your school recently. It is a satisfactory school and you told us that you enjoy going there. We appreciated the warm welcome you gave us. This is what we found out while we were with you.

- Your achievement is reasonable because of sound teaching and a satisfactory curriculum, but you do not reach the standards expected for your age.
- We are glad that there are so many clubs and other activities and that you enjoy taking part in them.
- You behave well and are growing up as sensible young people who are friendly and all get on well together. Well done!
- You practise what you have learned to keep healthy, fit and safe.
- The staff are kind and help you to deal with the little problems that you meet in your everyday lives.
- Your teachers and the people in charge are doing a sound job. They work hard and know what to do to help the school improve. You help them to do this through the school councils.

These are the things that we have asked your teachers to do to make things even better for you.

- Make sure that, if you need it, the work is a bit harder for you at times and that your targets are just right for you. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that you know what to do to reach your targets.
- Make sure that those of you who need extra help always get what you need so that you do better in your work.
- Give children in the Nursery and Reception classes more chances to choose what they do.

We wish you all the very best in the future. Keep on enjoying school and trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Mrs B Crane (Lead inspector)