

# St Lawrence's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123779
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	327985
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John English

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	68
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	13
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alistair Glanvile
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Rice
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	School Hill Westbury-sub-Mendip Wells BA5 1HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01749 870437
<b>Fax number</b>	01749 870318

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	327985

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a very small, rural school. Almost all the pupils come from White British backgrounds. Only a very small proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of the children who join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have attended local nursery settings. Each of the three classes caters for more than one year group.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where the children achieve well in their lessons and develop as independently minded, confident young people. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection, and has good capacity to improve further. The pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Parents are very supportive of the school, particularly the happy, 'family' atmosphere and the way the school values each individual child. One parent spoke for many in writing, 'I have every confidence that my child will achieve a high standard academically, but more importantly that she will be a rounded, confident individual.'

The pupils achieve well in the course of their time at the school. In most years, children join the EYFS with skills and capabilities that are in line with those expected for their age. They go on to achieve standards above the national average by the time they leave school. Some year groups enter with standards that are below expectations, and these groups progress equally well so that they achieve national averages by the time they leave. Although standards in English generally match those in other subjects, there is a relative weakness in the quality of the boys' writing.

The pupils are articulate, sensible, and treat each other and adults with respect. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is exemplary, both in the classroom and in outside play, and they enjoy the wide range of sporting and other activities available to them. Most pupils enjoy school very much: one said, 'I wouldn't want to be anywhere else!' However, a minority find some lessons dull and unchallenging, and this reduces their enjoyment. Pupils feel safe at school and are very knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in situations like using the internet. They have an equally exceptional knowledge of how to stay healthy. Older pupils are kind and helpful to younger ones, and in many other ways pupils contribute to the smooth running of the school and engage in many activities in the wider village community and in the city of Wells.

Much of this is brought about through the excellent leadership of the headteacher. She provides outstanding direction to the work of the school, so that all the staff know exactly what their role is in seeking continual improvement, and give her their full support. She has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plans well to eliminate them. This is a truly inclusive school where individuals are all valued. Teaching and learning are good overall, although inconsistent, with some outstanding and some satisfactory features in different classes. There is sometimes a lack of challenge to pupils at all levels of ability within a class, and overall the curriculum, although good, does not sufficiently encourage boys to develop their writing skills.

The pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Appropriate child protection measures are in place which are carefully and regularly reviewed. The school works exceptionally well with outside professionals to care for any pupils with emotional, social or learning difficulties. Guidance given to many pupils on how they should improve is often very good, but it is inconsistent across the school. This means that some pupils are unsure about what they need to do to improve their work.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Most children start school with skills and capabilities broadly in line with those expected for their ages, and many complete the year exceeding expected levels. Liaison with the nursery schools and the exceptional care with which the children are introduced to routines help them settle in quickly. They feel exceptionally safe and happy in their new school. Accurate assessment of each child's capabilities helps children make good progress and achieve well over the course of the year. Learning is enhanced by sharing targets with the children. The welfare and personal development of the children are outstanding. The way in which the children work independently and cooperatively is carefully nurtured and supports learning and the children's personal development. The EYFS is well led; the two adults work well together and joint planning is good.

The outside area is used effectively, although resources, especially for child-initiated activities, are not as plentiful and varied as they could be to maximise learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards of boys' writing by providing a wider variety of contexts that will encourage them to write.
- Improve learning by ensuring that the guidance given to pupils on how to improve their work is consistently good throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that, in all lessons, pupils of all abilities are set challenging work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards on entry to the EYFS are above average in most years. These year groups make good progress in the EYFS and Year 1, satisfactory progress in Years 2 and 3, and particularly good progress in the final three years, so that by the end of Year 6 they attain levels above the national average. Some year groups enter the EYFS with standards that are below expectations. They follow the same pattern of progress and attain average standards. Consequently, pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Throughout the school, standards in mathematics are particularly good, and although these are closely matched by standards in English, boys' writing is a relative weakness because boys do not have enough opportunities to write about things that interest them.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils develop into articulate, self-confident young people. They feel safe at school, and know how to keep themselves safe elsewhere. It is particularly impressive how well informed they are on safety when using the internet. They are exceptionally well informed on what they have to do to develop a healthy lifestyle, and most act on this advice. Most very much enjoy school and take pride in helping each other, both in lessons and on the playground. A few say that in some lessons they are set tasks that are too easy, and this reduces their enjoyment. Pupils enthusiastically take part in a wide range of community activities and enjoy raising money for a variety of charities and for improving their school. Members of the school council take an active role in identifying issues they want to see improved.

Attendance is above the national average. The pupils have developed tolerance and understanding of each other as individuals and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They display positive attitudes towards their learning and work well together and on their own. Behaviour is exemplary and the pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The pupils make good progress because they have a good attitude to work and respond very well to the teachers' input. Typically, lessons are well structured, so that the pupils know what they are going to learn and how it links to what they have learned previously. Interactive whiteboard technology is used well to make teachers' presentations more interesting. In most classes, lessons have a good pace, with a good variety of activities which are different enough for pupils in the different year groups to meet their needs well. Teaching assistants take a key role through their work with small groups with particular needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is too slow and pupils are given repetitive and unchallenging work which reduces their progress and enjoyment of learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Most pupils appreciate the range of subjects offered by the school. The provision for English, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) and science is good. Other subjects are well represented in the curriculum. There is a wide range of clubs and activities out of lessons, and particularly good provision for sport. Specialist music lessons also considerably enhance the curriculum. Pupils especially enjoy the visits off site and the fact that visitors come into school to enrich their learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 particularly like the residential trip and the relationships which are forged with staff on such visits. Although in most respects the curriculum engages the pupils well, it does not provide boys with topics that interest them enough to encourage them to improve their writing.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The pastoral care given by the school is exemplary and all pupils feel safe and confident that staff will listen to and help them, no matter what the issue. Where necessary, the school works exceptionally closely with outside professionals to provide any additional support needed for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All safeguarding procedures are securely in place and the school takes its duty of care very seriously. The school makes every effort to improve attendance but holidays taken in term time keep the figure at its present level.

Although the level of academic support given to pupils is not consistent across the whole school, it is outstanding in some year groups. This means there is much excellent practice on which the school can build. However, not all pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve their performance, although many know their personal targets well.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher provides excellent direction to the work of the school. She has moulded the staff into an effective team which is fully focused on improving standards. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in almost all aspects of the provision of the school since the previous inspection, although she and the governors accept that there is further still to go. Together they have a very good understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of the school. They plan meticulously to ensure that weaknesses are tackled, if necessary using outside assistance, for example local authority advisers, wisely to achieve their aims. The governing body monitors the work of the school well and ensures that standards are maintained and improved. Governors ensure that the school cares equally for all children. Because of a recent staffing change, subject leadership has been reorganised, so those who have taken up a new role have had limited time to make a significant impact. However, they clearly understand their role in improving the quality of the provision, and have made a promising start. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion by taking part in many activities in the village and nearby city.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

**Annex B**

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

20 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Lawrence's Church of England Primary School, Wells BA5 1HL

Thank you very much for your welcome when we visited your school. We were very impressed by many things and, in particular, the way you are growing up to develop into caring and confident young people. Your behaviour and your attitude to work are outstanding and help the teachers to maintain the very good working atmosphere in the classrooms. We were very impressed by how much you know about how to keep yourselves safe, especially when using the internet.

You are also making good progress in your lessons, and many of you are achieving standards which are above the national average. This is because the teaching is good, although in some lessons some of you should be set more difficult tasks which really make you think. Some of you, especially boys, need to work harder on your writing, and we have asked the school to provide a wider variety of opportunities to write about things you find particularly interesting.

Your school is well led by your headteacher and governors, which is why all the adults work so well as a team and care for you so well. Some of you get very good advice on how to improve your work, but not all of you do, and we have asked the school to make sure that all of you know your targets to help you to learn.

Keep working hard, supporting each other the way you do, and in particular work on your writing, and we believe you will leave the school very well prepared for the next stage in your education!

With best wishes

John English Lead inspector