

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110838
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	325236
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Sandra Tweddell

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Banjo
Headteacher	Mrs Anna Reeder
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 May 2006
School address	French's Road Cambridge CB4 3JZ
Telephone number	01223 566879
Fax number	01223 566879

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Luke's is a small school taking pupils from a diverse range of social and cultural backgrounds. Around half comes from a White British background and half from a wide range of different ethnic groups, including Bangladeshi and various White groups. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is much higher than that of most schools; a significant number of these pupils are at early stages of learning English. Almost a quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals, a proportion much larger than that of most schools. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average, but more pupils have a statement of special educational needs than in most schools. Their learning needs are mainly behavioural, social and emotional or moderate learning difficulties. A high number of pupils change schools part way through the year, some entering and others leaving.

The school is emerging from a period of staffing instability with a new leadership team, including the headteacher, appointed in September of this year. Awards include National Healthy Schools, International School Status and Basic Skills and Accreditation Mark.

There is pre-school provision on the premises, but it is privately managed and subject to a separate report.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

'St Luke's was always seen as a caring and welcoming school; now it is becoming a high-achieving school too.' This comment by a parent accurately sums up the increasing effectiveness of the school. Excellent leadership by the highly experienced headteacher is the reason. Overall effectiveness and value for money are currently satisfactory as the impact of improved teaching and learning is yet to be fully felt. Teaching is now at least satisfactory and often good because of the work to improve consistency across the school, but learning, although improving, lags behind.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have been dropping for the past few years and have been below average, but progress this year has accelerated and stopped the decline. At the end of Year 6, standards have been inconsistent, but over the last two years have improved to be close to average. Currently, achievement is satisfactory overall, although there are still differences in the performance of groups of pupils, such as those between boys and girls and more able pupils, but the school is tackling this well. The presentation of work by pupils is often poor. Writing, a weaker area, has rightly been identified as a focus for development. Strategic deployment of staff ensures that pupils who fall behind are effectively supported.

The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and they understand how to live healthy lives and to keep safe because care for them is paramount. Their behaviour is good because they respect their teachers and feel valued by them. The attendance of a number of pupils is irregular, but the school cannot do more than it does to encourage good attendance. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but very effectively supports pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of the community and the world. The headteacher has rightly identified that assessment is insufficiently refined for staff to set targets that are more challenging for all pupils, particularly the more able, and for all to know how to improve their work.

Effective strategic leadership by the chair of governors has established a framework within which governors can monitor the work of the school. The headteacher is expecting more of the new leadership team and some responsibilities can be devolved for the first time. The school welcomes and celebrates its diverse communities, involving them very successfully in its work. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about this, the leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of the 'extraordinary teachers' who 'work in a great team' and whose personalities 'aid the school greatly'. Improvement since the last inspection has accelerated this year. Rising standards, increasing consistency of teaching and learning, very effective leadership of the headteacher supported by her governors and strong partnership with the local authority give the school good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Reception class with lower than usual skills for their age and much lower skills in some aspects of literacy. They make good progress in their social development and are well prepared to enter Year 1. Progress in other areas of learning is satisfactory, and learners' skills remain below those expected for their age. Boys often do better than girls in mathematics, but the latter are ahead in

communication skills. Some boys lack concentration. There is not always sufficient challenge for children that are more able, an area that has been identified for improvement.

Adults work effectively together and are good role models for children's language and social development. A strong focus on literacy, with the support of the Reading Recovery programme, is improving progress in reading and writing. Many aspects of teaching and learning are good. Children enjoy learning because lessons are interesting. They respect their teachers and, generally, behave well. Teachers' questions make them reflect and develop their use of language. Occasionally, the pace of the lesson slows and children lose interest. Children's welfare is a high priority and an important key in helping them to flourish and feel safe. For example, a number of children recently arrived with little knowledge of speaking English. Specialist support was swiftly found and the children were effectively helped to gain confidence in using English in their new environment. Good links with Year 1 ensure continuity in learning. With careful guidance from the headteacher and support from the local authority, the management of the Reception class is developing well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue with the work to improve standards of writing across the school, including presentation.
- Ensure that the leadership team develops the skills to take responsibility for key areas of the school's work.
- Increase the rigour and use of assessment to ensure all pupils know what is expected of them and how they can improve their work, and provide greater challenge for the more able pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Across the school, progress has accelerated this year because of determined leadership, strategic deployment of staff and increasing rigour in use of assessment. Practice is improving in identifying and supporting those who fall behind to get them back on track. Last year, pupils in Year 6 made good progress to reach standards that were close to average in the national tests. This year, the school's accurate data show that pupils are on their way to reach their targets in the tests. Achievement in all classes is now at least satisfactory and increasingly good. Writing is a weaker subject but has improved this year because it was identified as a school priority and teachers responded well. There is still more to do, particularly in improving the presentation of work. Bangladeshi pupils have not achieved as well as others, but the school has recognised this and a range of initiatives this year, including targeting their work more closely and the involvement of parents, is improving their progress. Pupils from other groups make similar progress to their peers. The many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in line with that of others. Those pupils in Years 1 and 2, supported by Reading Recovery, have made impressive gains in literacy. While the achievement of the more able pupils is usually

satisfactorily, they often lack the necessary challenge that would enable them to reach higher standards. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their learning and respond well to the caring ethos of the school, a point confirmed by many parents. Relationships between adults and children are good. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. As a consequence, they feel safe and want to come to school. They play and work happily together and know what to do if things go wrong. They have a tremendous respect for one another and their diverse backgrounds because they are valued as individuals and reflect this in their treatment of one another. The school council makes a good contribution. Representatives feel they are listened to and that their views are valued. They believe their work is making the school a better place, such as in replacing the equipment in the younger children's playground. There is a strong emphasis on supporting charities and recently the school has been working closely with a school in Africa. Most pupils understand the need to adopt healthy and safe lifestyles. They enjoy exercise, and make particular use of equipment for additional physical activity at lunchtime. Recent measures to improve attendance are beginning to make a difference. Improvement is being achieved by working more closely with parents and pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The aim this year of ensuring consistency in teaching has been successfully achieved. Teaching is now at least satisfactory and frequently good, but has yet to impact fully on the progress that pupils make. Classrooms have a positive ethos because teachers are skilled in classroom organisation, have good relationships with the pupils and are enthusiastic and encouraging. All love teaching and this inspires the learners. Pupils are cooperative, attentive and eager to learn. Even so, in some classes, especially Years 1 and 2, where there is a wide range of ability and where English is an additional language for many pupils, they are not able to progress fast enough to enable them to reach the standards expected for their age. For many, this is because they need more time to build up basic literacy and numeracy skills and teachers take great care to address these issues. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6. Classroom assistants make an important contribution to lessons by providing effective levels of support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who are at an early stage in learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum has many good features, fostering both enjoyment of learning and good personal development. Pupils understand how to live safe and healthy lives because this is reinforced throughout the curriculum. A key strength is the contribution the curriculum makes to pupils' understanding of cultures and religions, helped by events such as the international weekend, which involved

members of the diverse local community. Extra-curricular clubs are well attended and enhance learning. Themes such as book week are greatly enjoyed by pupils and adults. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils but sometimes it is insufficiently challenging for boys or the more able pupils. The focus for curriculum development has been on standards of literacy and numeracy that have improved as a result. The school is rightly aware of the need to introduce more creativity into the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care for pupils is good because staff responsibilities and roles are clear and relationships with pupils are excellent. Pupils feel included, secure and valued and, consequently, their personal development is enhanced. The school has developed strong links with a wide range of organisations to support pupils' needs. It works hard and with increasing success to enlist the support of parents and the local community in promoting pupils' learning. Attendance and punctuality are high priorities. Systems for child protection and safeguarding pupils' health and safety are rigorous and fulfil the necessary requirements. Tracking of pupils' progress is beginning to match support to need, especially for those who require much individual help. However, targets set are, sometimes, still not specific enough to the individual pupil. The quality of written feedback to pupils from the marking of their work varies too much from class to class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has made great strides this year because of the excellent leadership of the headteacher. She has given a firm steer to all adults who work in the school, thereby increasing the common sense of purpose. The chair of governors has recently initiated a more rigorous approach to the work of the governing body. All governors use their expertise well and are most supportive of the school. The school has used the resources of the local authority very well to develop the skills of the senior leadership team. The team is now involved in school self-evaluation and confident to monitor the quality of its work. There are similar plans to enhance the performance of subject leaders. As the leadership team is newly established, the headteacher has carried most of the responsibility this year. She is now poised to delegate responsibilities because the professional development of senior colleagues has been successful. A major strength of the school is its contribution to community cohesion through its status as an international school and its successful work to draw in the wide range of ethnic groups within its community. Governors informally evaluate this work. Parents are very appreciative of the community involvement, the school's inclusivity and its racial harmony. As one wrote, 'We are especially impressed with how inclusive the school is; it is a diverse population and the children are very open-minded.'

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: 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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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?	2
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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹ 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

Annex B



11 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of St Luke's Church of England Primary School, Cambridge, CB4 3JZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, for answering our questions and telling us about your work. A special thank you goes to members of the school council for talking to us.

We were impressed with the very good way in which you get on with one another - something your parents told us about. You have respect for one another and enjoy learning about other ways of life, such as in the International Evening that you told us you thoroughly enjoyed. We were impressed by your good behaviour and how much you enjoyed your lessons. Your work has improved this year and most of you are now achieving at least satisfactorily. This is because Mrs Reeder, your teachers and other adults have worked very hard to help you to raise the standards of your work. We noted that you knew how to stay safe and healthy, and we agree with you and your parents that you are well cared for.

We talked with Mrs Reeder about what are the next steps for your school. We agreed the following.

- Your writing has improved this year but can improve further. Also, some of your handwriting is very careless, and you should improve how you present your work.
- You have a new team of school leaders to help Mrs Reeder and they will be taking over more responsibilities next year.
- The targets for your work are going to become more challenging. You can help by working to achieve them.
- A few of you are frequently absent so you fall behind with your learning. Mrs Reeder is going to work with your parents to see if you can attend more regularly.

We really enjoyed being in your school. We wish you happy and successful futures.

Yours faithfully

Sandra Tweddell
Lead inspector