

# St Lucia's CofE Primary School

Upton Magna, Shropshire, SY4 4TZ

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and governing body provide very strong leadership, which has led to rapid improvement.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Standards in reading are high by Year 6 because pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils enjoy reading and read a good deal.
- Teaching is good. Since the last inspection, training for staff, monitoring and support have led to consistently good teaching.
- Pupils in every year group are making at least good progress in writing and mathematics.
- There are very good arrangements for keeping pupils safe while they are in school.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities. Teachers make learning purposeful and enable pupils to develop their basic skills.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its improvement plan rightly identifies the key areas in need of improvement.
- Staff are positive about the headteacher's leadership. They work hard to implement the wide range of changes that are supporting improvements.
- Staff are now taking responsibility for leading aspects of school improvement. Pupils contribute to this too.
- Pupils behave well and feel quite safe in school.
- Good attendance and pupils' enthusiasm for learning support their good achievement and add to the school's positive atmosphere.
- Parents are very positive about the school. All who gave their views would recommend the school to other parents.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough in writing and mathematics to lead to outstanding progress. Teachers do not always match work precisely to pupils' abilities.
- Computers are not used to full effect to support teaching and help pupils learn on their own.
- Records of progress made by children in Reception are not well presented and do not reflect parents' contributions.
- The school's capacity for further improvement is limited by a small budget deficit.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector and the headteacher observed six lessons together. All teachers and a physical education coach were seen. Other aspects of school life, such as the breakfast club, assemblies, break and lunchtimes were observed.
- The inspector and headteacher carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work to see how frequently pupils have opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across all subjects.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority. The inspector listened to younger pupils read and met with a group of older pupils.
- The inspector examined a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, assessment information, records of staff training and checks carried out on staff, volunteers and governors. Information on the school's website was also scrutinised.
- The inspector examined 18 responses to the online parental questionnaire (Parent View) and took account of the school's own survey of the views of 48 parents, carried out in the summer term this year.

## Inspection team

Susan Aldridge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Lucia's is a small primary in a village outside Shrewsbury. Pupils come to the school from a wide area.
- There is a privately run pre-school on the same site as the school and this is separately inspected. The governing body provides a breakfast club each morning.
- A lower than average proportion are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional government funding given to schools to support groups of pupils, including those eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The proportions being supported at school action or school action plus are below average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection two years ago there has been a change of headteacher. The present headteacher started as an acting headteacher in September 2012 and the appointment was made permanent in January 2013. In the period since the last inspection there has been considerable turbulence in staffing caused by long-term illness.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to raise standards in writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - resources and support are finely tuned to meet pupils' individual needs throughout lessons
  - information and communication technology is fully exploited as a teaching and learning tool in all classrooms.
- Provide leaders and parents with an efficient overview of progress made by Reception children by ensuring records are well presented and reflect parents' contributions to the progress made.
- Strengthen the school's capacity for further improvement by ensuring that the small budget deficit is eradicated.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in Reception with the knowledge and skills generally expected at their age. Provision in Reception is good and so pupils make good progress. The proportions at expected levels by the end of Reception have exceeded national averages for the last two years. In recent years, the school has found that some children have difficulties with the physical skills needed to support the development of writing, such as being able to grasp a pencil. It is working with nursery providers to support improvement throughout Nursery and Reception years.
- Similarly good progress is made in Years 1 and 2, and pupils achieved well to reach above average standards overall in 2012 and 2013. There was a marked improvement in Year 1 pupils' skills in phonics (the links between sounds and letters) in 2013. The proportion that met the standard in 2013 was well above the national average; in 2012 it was below the national average. The improvement was a result of training provided for staff to strengthen their teaching skills in this area.
- In Key Stage 2 past standards have varied. It is here that the impact of having several different teachers has been felt and pupils' progress slowed for a time two years ago. However, the most recent data show that in all year groups pupils make more progress than expected. For instance in reading, last year's Year 6 made the equivalent of two year's progress in a year. They were able to reach high standards by the end of the year.
- The same year group were also held back in writing by staff changes earlier in the Key Stage. Some had started in Year 3 lacking confidence in and enthusiasm for writing, and did not make enough progress until they started Year 6. The school's data shows that during Year 6 they made the equivalent of four terms progress and this represents good achievement. The year group reached average standards.
- Published data for mathematics suggests that the progress of last year's Year 6 between Years 3 and 6 required improvement, but the school's shorter-term data again shows a more positive picture during Year 6. In a year, pupils again achieved well, making the equivalent of more than four term's progress in mathematics.
- The small numbers of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. These pupils are quickly identified and additional support sought to formally assess and meet their needs.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and the small numbers of pupils are supported well. In recent years these pupils in Year 6 have reached at least Level 4 (the expected level), and sometimes Level 5 in English and mathematics. They have outperformed their peers.
- More-able pupils are catered for effectively. Currently, small groups are taught separately for part of the week's English and mathematics lessons and they are making good progress. This initiative is too recent for its impact to be formally evaluated.
- All parents who responded to the online survey (Parent View) indicated that they were happy with the progress their children are making.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teachers and their assistants establish good working relationships with pupils, who appreciate their kindness and the help they give. In their turn, pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning result in good engagement during lessons so they make good progress. All those who spoke to an inspector were able to identify ways in which their work has improved.
- Changes to the marking policy are being implemented well. Marking is good and well understood by pupils. It is firmly based on learning objectives and success criteria (steps to success). Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own work and that of others.
- The older pupils know their personal English and mathematics targets and they are quite clear about what they need to do to improve. They are beginning to respond to teachers' marking, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Lessons are well planned to build on the learning that has gone before, but teaching is not always fine-tuned to match every ability and so lead to outstanding progress. Teachers use a variety of ways to make sure that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities, but within an individual lesson sometimes miss ways in which resources could be better exploited. For example, occasionally, teaching assistants are not used actively throughout a session, and so their good skills are not used to maximum effect.
- In Reception, children have clear targets and staff make regular observations of children and record in detail their responses. Evidence, such as photographs, is usually dated and annotated. However, records are not always well presented to show the key milestones in children's development. Parents contribute to the information the school has, from their knowledge of their children's development, but this is not reflected in records. This means that it is not easy for parents to see or leaders to analyse the progress children are making.
- Improvements in teaching have been underpinned by training for staff, such as in making accurate assessments of pupils' writing skills. These have been checked internally and externally and found to be accurate. Good use is made of additional guided reading sessions and reading resources that reinforce pupils' phonics skills.
- Teaching staff have adjusted their planning to ensure that there are good opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This was a weakness at the last inspection. The use of ICT as a resource for teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection; however, the resource is still not exploited fully in all classrooms to support pupils in gaining the skills of independent study. Pupils enjoy using the laptops but find the computers are slow at times.
- When teaching assistants are deployed effectively they support pupils well, including those with disabilities or special educational needs. They provide sufficient help to keep pupils' motivation high but allow pupils to 'have a go' so that they do not become over-reliant on adult support.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully and try their best. They are keen to answer questions and have the confidence to ask their own questions and make suggestions. Their work is most often neatly presented and they enjoy making use of ICT to present and illustrate their work when given the opportunity.

- Pupils say that they feel quite safe in school and are adamant that neither they nor their friends have experienced any bullying. There are no recorded instances of bullying in the school's log and the majority of parents who expressed a view had no concerns about bullying in the school. Pupils say that those who are new are helped to settle, as there are older 'buddies' and a 'friendship stop' in the playground for anyone who has nobody to play with.
- Pupils contribute strongly to improvements in school and the local community. The school council has three active committees, one for school improvement, a fundraising group and an eco-committee. Contributions include collecting suggestions for improving lunchtime activities, raising funds to resource these as well as for charities, and sorting waste materials at a local centre. Pupils have helped secure improvements to play facilities at a nearby National Trust property.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the headteacher and governors have tightened up the school's policy on holidays taken during term-time. Punctuality is good.
- The school provides good supervision at break times and both ends of the school day. Most pupils know a good deal about how to keep themselves safe, including learning safe cycling and about cyber bullying.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and her role in moving the school forward has been crucial. Her calm and professional approach, experience, high ambition and sharp focus on teaching and learning have combined well to accelerate improvement. The staff are right behind her and they appreciate the opportunities they have been given to extend their knowledge and skills.
- The headteacher has instigated many developments. For example, the school now has a system of checking on pupils' progress each half term. This has enabled staff to gain rapid feedback on progress for Years 1 to 6. It has also enabled teachers to see how well the pupils in their class are progressing and identify quickly those pupils who are in need of additional help. It also provides leaders with a reliable means of evaluating teaching.
- The local authority has given good, timely support. For instance, training has been provided and advisers have worked alongside subject leaders to help them develop their roles. Leaders are now confident in many of the tasks they need to carry out, including using data to check on the effectiveness of their subjects.
- The range of learning experiences provided is good. By linking subjects together into topics, pupils' learning is meaningful and staff make it purposeful too. Work in school is brought to life through visits, visitors and partnerships such as with the National Trust. There is a good range of after-school clubs for a small school.
- There has been a strong emphasis on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection and all of these have been dealt with well. The new school improvement plan, which extends over three years, is based firmly on the school's own evaluation which accurately identifies writing and mathematics are areas for ongoing development.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe have been strengthened since the last inspection, as a result of changes to the school's entrance. A higher than usual proportion of staff are trained in first aid. Staff and governors are all fully checked to ensure that they are suitable to work with

children. The breakfast club provides a caring environment and is popular with pupils and parents.

- In this small school, a large proportion of the budget is allocated to staffing. Periods of staff absence resulted in employment of additional staff and led to a budget deficit. Although this has reduced to a reasonable level it has not been eradicated and this limits resourcing of school improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is very strong. Governors acted decisively following the last inspection and were active in their search for an experienced headteacher. They provide strong challenge, readily asking questions based on their independent scrutiny of data about standards and progress.
- Link governors visit the school to check first-hand on the provision. They have completed 'book trawls' with subject leaders, for example. They know exactly how effective teaching is and play a full part in decision making about salary increases for teaching staff.
- All statutory requirements for reporting are met. For instance, the informative website has an account of how pupil premium funds have been used and how effective this has been. The evaluation of primary funding for physical education is at an early stage, but inspection evidence suggests that the funds are being spent well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123508
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426981

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	P Jarvis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah L Woolley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 December 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01743 709652
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