

# St Luke's CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Lowton, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 2PW

**Inspection dates** 19–20 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make rapid progress and they leave Year 6 with above average attainment especially in English.
- The school's focus on writing has been very successful, resulting in pupils making especially good progress in writing.
- The school provides a calm, caring and purposeful atmosphere for learning. The skills of individual pupils are valued, their talents nurtured and their confidence developed.
- Attendance is above average, paying testament to the pleasure pupils feel in coming to school.
- Teaching is good, especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers are knowledgeable, plan lessons carefully, explain things clearly and manage their classes well.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons. They say that they feel very safe in school.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a clear view of how to improve the school. The regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons by senior leaders has improved the quality of teaching and consequently, the progress pupils make.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching across the school.
- Pupils are not always aware of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to achieve their individual learning targets.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not quite as good as that in English. This is because more-able pupils are not always set hard enough work and pupils have not fully developed their skills in mental mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and part-lessons, taught by seven teachers. Two of these were joint observations with one of the headteachers.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Discussions were held with pupils, parents, staff, governors and the lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- Twenty eight responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered as well as those from the school's latest parental survey.

## Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gordon Alston

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Luke's Church of England is a slightly smaller than average sized primary school.
- Very few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. However, the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school facility based on the premises.
- The school is led by two members of staff who share the role of headteacher. One is the substantive headteacher, who works two days per week and on the other three days the school is led by the co-headteacher who has been appointed to take over the school full time from January 2014.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups, or speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding across the school, and particularly in mathematics lessons by:
  - using individual learning targets more effectively so pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next level in their learning
  - ensuring pupils, particularly the more able in mathematics lessons, do not spend most of their time completing easier tasks before moving on to the more challenging activities
  - improving pupils' confidence and skills in rapid, mental calculation.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. They make good progress during their time in the school. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6 their attainment is above average.
- Children settle quickly into the Reception class and learn routines for successful learning. This gives them a good start for their future learning. By the time children enter into Year 1, they are working within and increasingly beyond expected levels.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average and is rapidly improving, particularly in reading and writing. In lessons, pupils concentrate well, answer questions enthusiastically and are keen to learn. Although rates of progress are not quite as quick as they are in Key Stage 2, they are speeding up.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. They leave the school at the end of Year 6 with above average attainment particularly in writing. Pupils know how to make their writing exciting and use alliteration and similes together with interesting vocabulary to 'hook' the reader from the outset.
- The school has worked effectively to reinforce literacy skills across other subjects, developing lessons around a theme. As a result, pupils are given plentiful opportunities to practise their writing skills.
- A strong focus on teaching phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make) has a positive impact upon pupils' reading. Pupils read fluently and accurately and enjoy a variety of books that promote their enjoyment of reading.
- While pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, progress in English is stronger. The tasks set for more-able pupils in mathematics are not always difficult enough. Consequently, fewer pupils reach the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 or Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics. The school has worked closely with an external consultant to identify strategies to 'close the gap' between English and mathematics. This is resulting in improvement. However, pupils are not always confident when making rapid, mental calculations.
- The pupil premium is spent wisely to provide support, trips and one-to-one tuition for the small number of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as their classmates and make better progress than similar pupils in most other schools.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. They receive timely and well-targeted support from teachers and are ably supported by talented classroom assistants.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching was observed in almost all lessons during the inspection. Although no outstanding teaching was observed, pupils' workbooks and the school's data indicated that teaching over time is having a good impact and is resulting in good progress, particularly in English in Key Stage 2.
- In lessons, pupils' social and moral development is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas, work in pairs and groups and discuss ideas and information sensibly.
- Teachers create a classroom atmosphere in which pupils are relaxed and enjoy their learning. Most lessons use interesting resources. Topics are explained clearly and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers display good subject knowledge and plan lessons well to enthuse and motivate pupils.
- Literacy is particularly well taught. Drama, role play and exciting tasks and activities that motivate pupils, result in pupils producing pieces of work that are of a high standard. The hard work and thought that has gone into lessons is very evident. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils

had witnessed a murder and had to write from the point of view of a guest at the wedding. This captured their imagination, generated ideas that were discussed with great delight and their enjoyment was tangible.

- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils who are capable of working at a faster pace, are not given hard enough work. For example, in a mathematics lessons, more-able pupils had to work their way through easy work, before reaching the more challenging activities.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly and they are given helpful pointers on how to improve their work. Examples of good marking were seen in many year groups, where pupils respond to the teachers' marking and complete any further challenges the teachers set.
- Pupils are given a set of targets designed to help them to reach the next level of working. However, pupils do not always understand which of these targets to prioritise in order to quickly improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils are delightful. They are extremely well mannered and courteous to each other, adults in the school and to visitors. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- They are helpful towards one another and show understanding and respect for people of different faiths and cultures. They love their school and enjoy their learning their above average attendance confirming this.
- They feel extremely safe in school and are very well supported by adults. They take on responsibilities, read to younger members of the school during break times and undertake tasks in the well-run breakfast and after-school facility.
- Members of the school council play an important role in taking suggestions for improvements to senior staff. These responsibilities foster pupils' sense of community very well and give them insights into how they can help others beyond the school.
- They understand the different forms of bullying to which they may be subjected including the potential dangers the internet and mobile telephone may bring with them and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are adamant there is no bullying and are confident that should bullying occur, it will be dealt with effectively.

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

- Leaders and managers have created an atmosphere in school where all individuals, staff and pupils feel valued. Pupils' skills and talents are nurtured and all groups of pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Leaders and managers have successfully enhanced the quality of teaching and raised levels of attainment.
- The school's leaders have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and development areas and self-evaluation is accurate. Reviews of teacher performance, including the teaching assistants are used well to support the school's priorities and are linked appropriately to teachers' progression through the salary scales.
- Rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching and learning and the effective training delivered to staff by school colleagues have helped to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' achievement.
- The progress of groups of pupils and individuals is monitored regularly by all leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. Appropriate action is promptly taken to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can. Successful work done with the other schools within the locality has had a particularly beneficial effect on improving pupils' writing.
- The curriculum is rich and varied with opportunities for pupils' basic skills to be used across other subjects. It gives good support to both academic achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through its programmes of study and visits and visitors. This is a very

welcoming school where respect is promoted and equality and diversity are celebrated. By the time pupils leave the school, they are well-prepared for their secondary education.

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. As well as a flourishing Parent-Teacher Association, workshops for parents also to enable them to play a fuller part in their child's education. These are supplemented by 'Inspire', an innovative series of meetings for parents of pupils joining the school in the Reception class. Responses from parents to the school's own survey and to the on-line questionnaire were very positive and supportive of the school.
  - The local authority provides light touch support for this good school. Training and support are largely provided through the consortium of schools and funded by the schools themselves.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body ensures that the pupil premium funding has a positive impact on the progress of the pupils entitled to that funding. Governors make certain that staff are well trained and that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. They attend presentations by senior staff to ensure they are fully informed and ask questions to challenge data and support the school. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching, including the way in which teachers' performance is monitored. Governors have a designated committee that allocates salary progression as a result of the evidence brought by senior leaders. This good knowledge of the school is enhanced by an open day when governors work alongside pupils when visiting classes.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106485
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	403018

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Lever
<b>Headteacher's</b>	Christine Groves Steve Hardaker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 201140
<b>Fax number</b>	01942 205048
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@admin.saintlukes.wigan.sch.uk

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