

Inspection of a good school: St Lawrence CofE Primary School

Shrewsbury Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 6EX

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 June 2024

Outcome

St Lawrence CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

A love of the great outdoors is something that pupils quickly develop at this school. Nestled in the Carding Mill Valley, staff take every opportunity to make use of the school's idyllic location. Pupils benefit from an extensive outdoor and adventurous offer, including hiking, camping, orienteering and pond dipping, to name but a few.

This is an inclusive school where pupils are placed at the centre of all decisions. Staff have high expectations and pupils achieve well.

The St Lawrence Way values of 'BEST' (be responsible, encourage others, show respect and try our best) permeate throughout all aspects of school life. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They try hard in their lessons and play well together.

Pupils feel happy and safe. They value the breadth of opportunities that are available to them. These include trips, local visits and a broad offer of clubs.

Pupils make a difference to their school and community with leadership roles such as mentors, reading buddies and sports ambassadors. Older pupils take pride in sharing their skills with younger pupils, as well as helping to lead community events. These include singing at a local care home or exhibiting their artwork to the community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. It sets out precisely the knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils need to learn and the order in which these should be taught. Staff deliver the curriculum with expertise, which enables pupils to progress well with their learning.

There is a strong focus on developing a love of reading. Pupils talk animatedly about the books that they have read. The school has implemented a new approach to teaching phonics. This is beginning to develop a more consistent approach. Most pupils become

confident and fluent readers. Staff identify pupils who need extra support to learn to read and provide additional reading sessions. However, sometimes pupils move on too quickly without gaining a secure grasp of the sounds that they have learned. This impedes their fluency.

Pupils fully embrace an active lifestyle and benefit from a vast array of sporting opportunities. The physical education (PE) curriculum is ambitious and well thought through. As well as an overwhelming sense of enjoyment, pupils talk articulately about how they develop skills and tactics as they progress throughout the school. This helps them to become confident and competent in a range of different sports, including swimming. Almost all pupils can swim before they leave the school.

The school promotes inclusion. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately. Appropriate support is put in place to enable pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as their peers. The school supports the social, emotional and mental well-being of all pupils extremely well. Parents and carers commented highly on the pastoral support that pupils receive.

Children in the early years get off to a great start. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes. The curriculum is ambitious and carefully tailored to meet the needs of all. Children listen attentively, take turns and share resources well. They are well prepared to embrace the school's active ethos, joining in with hiking, forest schools and swimming lessons. Children know what is expected of them. They take great care in helping to keep the classroom tidy and organised.

Pupils behave well. They are clear about the school's rules. Lessons proceed without disruption. Most pupils attend well and where concerns about pupils' attendance arise, the school takes swift action to work with families to promote good attendance. In most cases, this is having a positive impact.

The school has a well-designed programme for pupils' wider personal development. There is a strong link between the curriculum and the trips, visits and other opportunities that enhance learning. Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven throughout school life. Pupils know about differences and discrimination. The curriculum provides a wide range of books and experiences that ensure pupils understand our diverse world. Pupils and staff have a real passion for caring for the environment and are proud of the awards they have achieved for their eco-friendliness.

Staff are proud to work at this school. There is a strong sense of teamwork. They value leaders' consideration of their well-being.

Governors know the school very well. They fulfil their role effectively in providing oversight, support and challenge to the school. Most parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, praising the caring and nurturing ethos and the wider opportunities on offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils who have fallen behind with their reading are not catching up quickly enough. Books the pupils read are not always well matched to their needs. This prevents pupils from practising the sounds they have learned and impedes their fluency. The school should ensure that pupils who have fallen behind get the help they need to become fluent readers.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	123468
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10322760
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emily Russell
Headteacher	Alan Brannen
Website	www.st-lawrenceprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Christian ethos and is part of the Diocese of Hereford. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in June 2018. The next inspection is due within eight years of the last inspection.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school has a hub that caters for four pupils with SEND.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders.

- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector also spoke to a representative from the diocese and a representative from the alternative provision.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings were also scrutinised.
- The inspector looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including the free-text comments. The inspector also reviewed the responses to the staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Cathy Young, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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