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## Jersey Schools Review Framework – Independent Report of St Lawrence Primary School

La Grande Route de St Laurent,  
St Lawrence,  
Jersey,  
JE3 1NG

Headteacher: Amory Charlesworth  
Review date: 19–21 September 2023

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### Summary

St Lawrence Primary School is a happy school where pupils support each other and abide completely by the school's values of independence, responsibility and success.

The school has a purposeful, cheerful and friendly atmosphere throughout. Attractive displays of pupils' work and activities, celebratory notices and an inviting library immediately greet any visitors.

The headteacher and his team have worked hard over recent years to raise standards and develop a better curriculum. As a result, the school has improved and now provides an effective and nurturing quality of education.

Children joining the Nursery enjoy a very well-planned and stimulating range of activities. After some staffing difficulties in recent years, the early years has developed into a strength of the school, providing children with a warm, secure and stimulating start to school life.

Staff want all pupils to succeed. Leaders, staff and pupils are understandably proud about how inclusive the school is. All pupils are important and valued. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), pupils who are eligible for Jersey Premium and those who join the school partway through the year are supported to make strong progress.

Pupils attain well and most make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading and writing. The school is working purposefully on improving outcomes in mathematics.

Teaching is mostly effective. Following some staff changes, leaders have rightly identified that the quality of teaching needs to be more consistent, with all teaching reaching the standard of the best in the school.

The school's overall curriculum has been reviewed in order to broaden pupils' experience and prepare them better for the next stage of their education. Teaching staff are now taking on more responsibility for leading their different subject areas. This work is at an early stage of development.

# Full report

## Achievement

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes benefit from a well-planned, stimulating and attractive indoor and outdoor learning environment that supports their cognitive development well. Over time, children in the early years acquire social, physical and communication skills which prepare them well for Key Stage 1.
- In general, the proportion of children in the early years reaching the expected level in all areas of learning is above the Jersey average. However, as a result of staffing turbulence, some children currently in Reception need to catch up. Sensible decisions about staffing and leadership in the early years are already leading to improved progress in lessons for all children in Reception and the Nursery.
- Children with SEND in the early years are extremely well-supported. Staff understand their needs and make sure that resources are suitable for children's rapid and sustained development.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have carefully planned the curriculum for pupils in Year 1 so that transition from Reception to Key Stage 1 goes smoothly and enables any pupils who have fallen behind to catch up.
- Pupils progress well in reading during Key Stage 1. Proficient teaching of phonics ensures that pupils acquire the building blocks for independent fluent reading further up the school. However, pupils do not always have books at the right level to help them practise their reading independently.
- Progress in writing in both key stages and the early years is strong and outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 are above the Jersey average. Pupils are encouraged to correct and edit their work systematically and develop a more extensive vocabulary.
- Leaders have recognised that progress in mathematics is not as strong as reading and writing, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and have adopted a commercial scheme that is already supporting teachers' subject knowledge and enhancing their confidence.
- Pupils with SEND, multi-lingual learners and those eligible for Jersey Premium benefit from specific interventions and support in class to help them achieve well in all subject areas.
- Outcomes in French are higher than those seen in other Jersey government-provided schools. In Year 4 pupils learn Jèrriais, achieving well and taking part in island competitions and poetry events.
- Following changes to the curriculum, pupils are beginning to demonstrate improving progress in science, history, geography and religious education. An increased focus on the unique and essential knowledge needed in each subject has led to better attainment. For example, in art, pupils' use of sketchbooks has resulted in a better progression of sketching skills, which will prepare them more thoroughly for secondary school.
- The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is planned and taught well right from the early years onwards. What pupils learn through the PSHE curriculum helps to enhance and reinforce their learning elsewhere. The progression of pupils' skills in maintaining positive mental health is mapped well across the school and evidenced in pupils' resilience and personal development.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and attentiveness leads to them making sound progress in lessons. Their well-presented work in books and on display is testament to their strong attainment and progression through the curriculum.

## **Behaviour, personal development and welfare**

- Pupils' behaviour, personal development and welfare are a strength of the school. The school's values of 'independence, responsibility and success' are tangible throughout.
- Staff have very high expectations of pupils, which start right from the beginning in the Nursery and Reception class. Children in the early years very soon get into responsible routines, developing independence and building up their confidence. They are eager to learn, form very positive relationships with adults and enjoy playing and learning together.
- Staff's warmth, encouragement and expertise foster pupils' good manners and positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils use time well in lessons, are motivated to learn and are alert and attentive. They respond promptly and cheerfully to instructions and need few reminders to concentrate and get on with their work.
- Pupils are taught about healthy eating and exercise right from the early years, with even the youngest children taking responsibility for positive snack routines, sharing and tidying up. During lunchtime and breaktimes, pupils play together happily, developing their own games and using the school's play equipment sensibly and safely. When eating together, pupils are respectful to lunchtime staff, keep the hall clean and tidy and enjoy chatting and socialising.
- Pupils know that their views and contributions to school life are valued and important. They are confident when speaking in lessons and to visitors. They listen well to each other and are proud of their peers' achievements.
- Pupils are punctual and attend well. Overall attendance rates are above the Jersey average and improving.
- The school's secure and caring ethos helps pupils to feel safe. They support each other and know there are trusted adults who can help them if they are in difficulties. Parents agree that the school is a safe and welcoming place for their children.
- A wealth of enrichment activities and clubs are in place – there is something for everyone, including those pupils who have SEND or who are eligible for Jersey Premium. It is rightly important to staff that all pupils have a proper stake in the school. Many pupils set up their own clubs and activities – and are encouraged to do so.
- Incidents of bullying are rare, but when concerns are raised, staff deal with these effectively. Older pupils are trained in peer mediation, which helps the pupils themselves sort out minor disagreements and friendship issues in a non-judgemental way.
- The school's PSHE programme helps to enhance pupils' understanding of their own feelings and character development. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to stay safe when online. Support for pupils' mental health is rightly a top priority in the curriculum and through the extra-curricular programme.
- Through assemblies, visits to the local parish church and calendared events, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on important questions and ideas. They are taught to respect and understand different faiths, cultures and types of family.
- Any low-level disruption to learning is rare. Very occasionally, pupils chat or become distracted if expectations are not clear enough or if they are not sure about the work they have been given.

## Effectiveness of teaching

- Teachers carefully plan ambitious and stimulating lessons. Their high expectations ensure that pupils concentrate on their work and are usually productive and purposeful in lessons. Classroom displays and resources are, in most cases, thoughtfully designed and arranged to enhance pupils' learning in addition to celebrating their achievement.
- Facilities and resources around the school support the curriculum well, including a wide range of musical instruments and outdoor equipment for the early years and sports.
- In the early years, planned resources and activities stimulate children's imaginations, including number, writing and reading activities. Children learn to play together, take turns and socialise, alongside learning about the world around them. The Nursery provision is a strength of the school. Adults pick up children's interests and activities and skilfully build up their understanding and communication. Children respond promptly and enthusiastically when drawn together as a group by the class teacher.
- While most teaching is effective throughout the school, some practice is still variable. When teaching is most successful, teachers are clear about exactly what they want pupils to learn, having taken into account what they already know. In these cases, any misconceptions are tackled promptly and pupils are given time to practise, repeat key concepts and edit their work, so that their learning is really secure and long-lasting. However, sometimes when the purpose of the lesson is not completely clear, pupils are not as focused as they should be, mistakes can go unchecked and they do not have enough practice.
- Nevertheless, teachers are responsive to pupils' answers and foster an atmosphere where pupils can ask questions and explore ideas. In the early years, especially in the Nursery provision, children benefit from high-quality rich conversations with adults.
- The development of pupils' spoken communication is one of the school's top priorities in Key Stages 1 and 2. When pupils are encouraged to answer in full sentences and use discourse markers that they have learned, their contributions convey increasing sophistication, confidence and fluency. However, this approach to spoken language is not consistently applied throughout the school. Not all teachers or pupils are confident about this approach to discussion sessions.
- Pupils' take care with their work and ensure it is generally well-presented. Books are orderly and provide an encouraging record of learning across all curriculum areas. In general, teachers adhere to the school's marking policy and encourage pupils to correct and edit their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in teaching early reading using phonics. Pupils respond well in group sessions to shared reading of sounds and words, making good progress with their early reading. It is very encouraging to see how much pupils like choosing and reading books. The school is well-resourced with good quality fiction and non-fiction in classrooms and the library. However, the books pupils have to practise reading independently are not always matched to the sounds and letter patterns they have learned.
- Curriculum planning for subjects other than English and mathematics is at a relative early stage and not all teachers are completely familiar with how some topics are sequenced. As a result, teaching does not always build upon what pupils already know, understand and can do.
- School leaders have introduced a new mathematics scheme which has helped to build up staff's confidence and subject knowledge. However, teaching of mathematics is still not consistently effective across the whole school. Not all mathematical tasks are explained clearly enough or modelled for pupils. In these cases, pupils sometimes make errors and do not get enough chance to repeat and practise.

- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and effective, providing additional sessions to support individual pupils and small groups, as well as ensuring that pupils with SEND can learn in class alongside their peers.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

- The senior leadership team lead the school by example in terms of ambition, kindness and inclusive values. Leaders ensure that all staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement and their personal development.
- Over recent years the headteacher and his team have systematically strengthened their skills and built leadership capacity. These improvements have helped to raise achievement, improved the quality of teaching and promoted a happy and welcoming school environment. School leaders and staff have had to work together and adapt during some difficult times, including during the pandemic and with staff changes or absences. Now the school is in a secure and stable position with further capacity for improvement.
- Leaders know the school well and have accurately identified what is working effectively and what needs to improve. Over time, the evaluation of the school's achievements and the priorities for improvement are based on a more precise analysis of pupils' outcomes and are therefore more relevant and focused.
- Leaders monitor teaching and learning carefully and make sure that staff receive appropriate and good-quality training to improve their practice. Staff who are new to the school or who at an early stage of their teaching careers are well-supported and given time to settle into their roles.
- The school's curriculum is rightly being developed to become broader. While there remains an appropriate focus on pupils' reading, writing and mathematics, pupils are also benefiting from well-chosen topics in other subjects, which is likely to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Strategic decisions to build up the curriculum, change leadership roles and staff responsibilities are managed well in the school. Staff feel valued, important and supported throughout.
- More staff are now taking on leadership roles for curriculum subjects, which is beginning to make a positive impact on what pupils learn and how well they are progressing in all areas. This work is still in progress. Subject leaders are not yet completely confident in monitoring their subjects and giving direct guidance to staff about what they teach and how to teach it.
- Recent changes to the leader's role in the early years have made a positive impact on the content of the curriculum for the Nursery, Reception class and Year 1. Teaching and the learning environment are helping to stimulate children's curiosity, provide a wealth of experiences and prepare them well for more formal learning during Key Stage 1.
- The school's embedded values and whole-hearted commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute to and influence all aspects of the school day.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the school are effective. Leaders are strongly committed to protecting children from risk of harm. Staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures and carry them out diligently. The school has stringent systems in place to ensure that pupils and staff members are kept safe. Policies and practice are fully aligned with current guidance and statutory requirements. Records of child protection concerns are orderly and carefully overseen to identify any patterns. The school works closely with outside agencies that protect children.

- Members of staff comment positively on the care that is taken to ensure that they are supported. Staff remark on the support that senior leaders give when dealing with challenging situations and the care shown for the mental health of staff.
- The school works closely with parents. A very active parent-teacher-association gives parents a voice and the views of all parents are sought regularly. Parents typically comment on the support they have had from the school if they have been through any challenging times.

## Recommendations

The school should take the following actions:

The next steps for the school

1. Improve the consistency of teaching in all phases, year groups and subjects so that all pupils achieve well across the curriculum, by ensuring that:
  - teachers are clear about exactly what they want pupils to learn
  - all teachers are skilled in explaining, demonstrating and modelling activities before pupils go on to work independently
  - teachers sequence lessons and topics logically and appropriately across the curriculum.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics in order to raise pupils' achievement by:
  - developing teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in mathematics and the new commercial scheme
  - supporting teachers with modelling mathematics activities and use of resources effectively
  - ensuring that pupils have sufficient time to practise and repeat key concepts.
3. Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - supporting all subject leaders with disseminating good practice in their subject
  - ensuring that subject leaders are confident when giving focused and precise feedback to their colleagues.

## Information about the school

<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	3 -11
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll:</b>	207
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mr Amory Charlesworth
<b>School telephone number:</b>	01534 863172
<b>School website:</b>	<a href="http://www.stlawrence.sch.je">www.stlawrence.sch.je</a>

## Contextual information

- St Lawrence Primary School is a one-form-entry primary school with 204 pupils on roll. 15% of pupils are eligible for Jersey Premium.
- The school has a Nursery on site.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the Jersey average at 14%.
- The school has a lower than average proportion of multi-lingual learners.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.

## Information about the review

Reviewers considered information about pupils' progress and attainment. A range of lessons were visited, including sessions in the Nursery and Reception class and reading, writing and mathematics lessons in every class. Lessons in subjects including science, art, music and French were also observed.

The lead reviewer listened to pupils reading from Years 2, 4 and 5. A group of pupils accompanied the lead reviewer on a tour of the school and reviewers also spoke to groups of pupils about their experience of school life.

Reviewers scrutinised a sample of pupils' work with subject leaders. They also looked at pupils' work in lessons and spoke to pupils in class and during play and lunchtime.

The views of parents were taken into account from conversations with parents collecting their children and the online survey. Reviewers considered the responses of staff to the staff survey.

## The review team

The review was led by an experienced off-Island reviewer and consisted of a total of three reviewers

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to Head School Improvement & Advisory Service, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Highlands Campus, PO Box 142, St Saviour, Jersey JE4 8QJ.