

St John's Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116103
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	379202
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2012
Lead inspector	Janet Sinclair

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandy Glasspell
Headteacher	Maureen Good
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
School address	Castle Way Southampton SO14 2AU
Telephone number	02380 266545
Fax number	02380 266545
Email address	head@st-johns.southampton.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	12–13 January 2012
Inspection number	379202



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair

Additional inspector

Olson Davis

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent eight hours observing teaching and learning in 18 lessons or part-lessons. They observed nine teachers and several teaching assistants. Inspectors also held meetings with members of the governing body, senior staff and three groups of pupils. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work, listened to a small number of pupils read and looked at a wide range of documentation including policies, particularly for safeguarding, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. They considered the 101 responses from questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

St John's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children in Nursery and Reception classes. There are 45 places in the Nursery and 45 children currently in the Nursery class. Most children transfer from the Nursery to the main school. There is a much higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, most of whom are at an early stage of learning English when they join the Nursery. A well-above-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The school became a trust school in September 2011. It is an evolving primary school and currently takes pupils up to Year 4. There is an extensive building refurbishment programme taking place to cater for the increasing numbers. There have been several recent staff changes.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has a strong, caring ethos that fully embraces its ethnic diversity and promotes a cohesive learning community.
- There are excellent relationships with parents and carers who feel very welcome in school and are encouraged and supported to engage fully in their children's learning.
- Children make a good start in the Nursery due to a welcoming environment and excellent relationships. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, teacher-led activities are planned well to promote effective learning. Although there is a range of independent activities for the children to engage in, planning does not always provide exciting stimuli or include enough guidance to staff on how to extend children's learning.
- Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 4. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress given their starting points.
- Teaching is good. It is well planned and organised within an effective curriculum that promotes learning. Occasionally, work is not matched well enough to pupils' needs and this slows learning. Teachers ensure pupils have targets and use success criteria to check they have met the expectations for the lesson. However, they do not always allow pupils to respond to feedback or set their own learning goals.
- Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and say that any form of bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with swiftly by staff.
- Strong, thoughtful leadership from the headteacher and assistant headteacher ensures good teamwork and a clear focus on providing a challenging learning environment for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that increasing proportions are outstanding by:
 - ensuring that work is always matched to pupils' needs well

- ensuring that marking is used consistently to help pupils improve
 - involving pupils more in assessing their own performance and setting goals for their learning.
- Improve planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage for activities that children undertake by themselves by:
- enabling adults to interact fully with children in order to extend their learning
 - providing activities that stimulate and excite children's curiosity.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start in the Nursery with skills levels and abilities well below those expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in speech and language. The good focus on speech and communication and the use of profiles to develop English as an additional language skills helps to address these weaknesses and narrow the gaps in attainment. Children make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and there were examples of exciting learning, such as in the Nursery when children were stimulated by their work on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Most recent assessments show that mainly children met the expected goals on entry to Year 1.

Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school. It is rising and the daily guided reading sessions and systematic phonics (sounds and letters) teaching observed by inspectors are helping to accelerate progress. Overall, pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress. The school is effective in closing any gaps in performance between the many different groups represented within it through the careful tracking of progress and effective interventions to support those not achieving well enough. For example, high-attaining pupils did not do as well as usual in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2011, so the school has worked hard to ensure a good improvement for pupils currently in Year 2. There has also been a special focus on increasing boys' enthusiasm for writing and this is having a good impact on attainment. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire consider that their children achieve well and this view is supported by inspection evidence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to early identification and well-planned interventions targeted at their specific needs. Teaching assistants are well trained and give effective support. Good use is made of outside agencies, particularly when catering for pupils with specific disabilities.

Quality of teaching

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, good relationships and a secure learning environment promote children's personal, social and emotional development well. The teaching of letters and sounds and number through teacher-led activity is

effective and ensures children make good progress. However, occasionally, activities are not stimulating enough, or go on too long without effective interaction, so that children lose interest. This is because planning in both classes for activities that children undertake by themselves is not informed by clear enough criteria for learning.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, good relationships, effective use of praise and good use of behaviour management strategies are hallmarks of all lessons. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in whole-class introductions. Also, they use information and communication technology well to engage pupils actively in their learning and this promotes enthusiasm and excitement. Teachers plan well for guided reading and ensure a good match of work to pupils' needs and this ensures that the pupils are engaged and concentrate well. Additionally, they assess pupils' progress regularly to diagnose their future learning needs. In Year 2, the excellent teaching of writing and the rigorous assessments are accelerating pupils' progress.

Although planning is mostly matched to pupils' learning needs well, ensuring that they succeed, occasionally, it does not challenge pupils enough or move them on in their learning sufficiently. In most lessons, clear success criteria are shared with pupils so they can judge how well they are doing. However, teachers do not always ensure that marking helps pupils to improve or involve them enough in setting their own learning goals. Teachers use questioning well to extend knowledge and understanding. For example, effective questioning in a Year 3 lesson elicited extended answers that developed pupils' ideas and vocabulary. Teachers and teaching assistants give effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities through clear explanations in whole-class introductions and well-directed activities that are taught effectively. Pupils at an early stage of learning English get good support. For example, in a literacy lesson, they had writing frames and were given opportunities to discuss what they were going to do prior to committing their ideas to paper.

The curriculum is broad and balanced with exciting topics such as the Year 2 project on the *Titanic* and French teaching in Years 3 and 4. This approach makes an effective contribution also to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. However, cross-curricular links are not used consistently to promote learning. Homework is provided satisfactorily through worksheets covering a variety of topics. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire consider that their children are taught well and this view is supported by inspection evidence.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has longstanding and effective systems for promoting good behaviour that are consistently implemented across the school. Relationships are consistently good and this supports an ethos of mutual courtesy and respect. Pupils enjoy being in school, behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.

During the inspection, all groups of pupils said they felt safe and most pupils who responded to the questionnaires agreed. The curriculum is used well to promote safety through, for example, road safety, the 'safe schools' initiative and when using

the internet. Pupils are conscious of the safety of others and ensure that disabled pupils are kept safe in the playground. All groups of pupils spoken to confirmed that incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively by staff.

Pupils said that behaviour is good overall, but that, occasionally, pupils get boisterous in the playground and some anti-social behaviour occurs. They said that supervisory assistants and teachers deal well with behaviour at break-times by praising good behaviour as well as dealing effectively with incidents of poor behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is good so that learning in lessons is not disrupted. There have not been any permanent or fixed-term exclusions in recent years. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire consider that their children are safe and behaviour is good and this view is supported by inspection evidence.

Leadership and management

The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. This is because all leaders, including the governing body, have high expectations and a strong focus on raising pupils' achievement and use effective monitoring and evaluation to take prompt action to address issues. They know pupils as individuals and monitor their progress carefully, looking particularly at the achievement of different groups. This demonstrates a good commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The school has maintained its good provision since the last inspection and attainment is rising and pupils' progress accelerating. The school has embraced its evolving status as a primary school and ensured the safety of pupils during the significant building works, which impinge on the playground. Safeguarding is good, with good policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of pupils.

The curriculum engages and motivates pupils through a wide range of interesting and exciting topics and provides many opportunities for pupils to participate in music, art, sport and after-school clubs. Pupils develop skills for adult life through business enterprise projects that involve them in working as a team and liaising with a local bank and Trailblazers that involves them in outdoor education. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through, for example, the Indian Kathakali presentation. The pupils fully appreciate and respect the different cultures represented within the school, are kind and caring towards each other and work well together.

Excellent links with parents and carers, through workshops, family learning, regular invitations to class assemblies, open mornings and the daily morning sessions when parents and carers help their children with a 'thinking' task, ensure that they are fully involved in their children's learning. There is also a website with stories in many different languages and a monthly parents' partnership meeting. The school benefits from collaborative work with the other schools that form the trust, for example in English and mathematics and site and office management.

The governing body provides effective support and a good level of challenge. It has played a significant role in the school's move to trust status and with the current building works.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's Primary and Nursery School, Southampton SO14 2AU

We enjoyed our visit to your school. We liked talking to the school council and were pleased to learn that you feel your views are listened to and you have an effective role in the school and wider community.

We judged that your school is a good school where your headteacher and all the staff work hard to take good care of you and help you achieve well. Here are some other things we liked about your school particularly.

- You make a good start to your education in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You behave well and feel safe in school.
- You get on well together and are kind and caring towards each other.
- Your teachers provide you with interesting activities that engage you in your learning.
- You enjoy the many activities such as Trailblazers and after-school clubs.

These are the things we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

- Help you all do even better by making sure work is always well matched to your needs and that you are more involved in checking how well you are doing.
- Help those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage to learn more quickly by planning more carefully for your independent activities and ensuring all adults support you in ways that challenge you.

You can help by getting involved in setting your own learning goals. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**