

# St John the Evangelist C.E. Nursery and Infant Sch

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110093
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	356687
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jill Bavin

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Erik Pattenden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janis Goodenough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Old Newton Road RG14 7DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0163541281
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 10 teachers, visited 21 lessons and made six extra short visits to classes. Additionally, the team met with staff, pupils and members of the governing body and analysed work in pupils' books. They scrutinised a variety of documentation including policies and documentation related to safeguarding, data about pupils' progress, monitoring and evaluation records, and school development plans. Responses from staff and 133 parents and carers were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for raising attainment in writing, especially for girls.
- The features of the school's strengths in its provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The extent to which all groups of pupils take the initiative in making healthy choices and contributing ideas about school improvement. The effectiveness and consistency of the school's strategies to provide pupils with opportunities to increase their independence as learners.

## Information about the school

The school has a part-time nursery which accepts children during the academic year in which they become four. Children join the Reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. Approximately half of these children are new to the school. There have been significant changes in the staff team for the Early Years Foundation Stage recently.

The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, although the proportion from minority ethnic groups and from homes in which English is not the first language has increased over recent years. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above average. Most of these pupils have difficulties related to language and communication.

An extensive building project reduced space in school until very recently. The school gained the Healthy School Award in 2010.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Some elements of its work are outstanding. Highly effective work to promote equality of opportunity and the excellent attention that is paid to care, guidance and support enables all groups of pupils to achieve equally well. There are examples of individual pupils facing particularly challenging circumstances who make exceptional progress socially and academically. At the time of the inspection, arrangements for safeguarding pupils were outstanding. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and are entirely confident that adults are available to support them. Parents and carers remark that, 'safety always comes first'. They indicate that they are impressed by the work that eases pupils' move into junior school as well as the 'warm' relationships that help in meeting pupils' individual needs. Attendance is above average.

Good improvement since the previous inspection indicates the school's good capacity for further development. Attainment for boys and girls has risen and is now above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities reach higher levels of attainment than found in most schools. Different groups of pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, make good progress from their various starting points. The extent of good teaching has increased because teachers share best practice more consistently than previously. Assessment has become more precise and provides the successful basis for meeting pupils' differing needs. Sometimes, opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and set their own challenges are missed, which constrains learning. The curriculum has strengthened with more opportunities to apply key skills through a variety of topics, most noticeably in writing, information and communication technology (ICT), and mathematics. While contributing to improved achievement, it is too soon for the full impact of these developments to be apparent in the outcomes for pupils.

These strengths contribute to pupils being well prepared for the next stage of their education, as does pupils' good behaviour, which on occasion is exemplary. Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong. Community cohesion is promoted well at a local and international level, but not so well nationally. Pupils' learning is enriched by direct links with children in Bangladesh and Ghana. Pupils demonstrate a mature approach to considering the lives of others whose backgrounds differ from their own. That said, the school has not implemented recent plans to make links with another school in the United Kingdom to give pupils greater experience of British cultural diversity. Pupils embrace the responsibilities available to them and have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle for their age. They hold strong and positive opinions about their school and how to make improvement but opportunities for pupils to act on their ideas are limited.

◆ The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the governing body, ensures that staff share high expectations of all pupils. The school's effectiveness is

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checked and modified rigorously and comprehensively, including the flexible provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Information is routinely and frequently shared with staff. As a result, staff share a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development as well as a strong sense of purpose and ambition for all pupils whatever their circumstances.

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

- Provide all groups of pupils with more opportunities to develop their own ideas and extend their learning by:
  - more routinely giving them greater choice and responsibility within lessons
  - enabling them to initiate and develop ideas and activities outside lessons.
- Strengthen community cohesion by implementing plans for pupils to make links with a school in the United Kingdom that differs from its own before Easter.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Most pupils join the school with levels of skill, knowledge and understanding that are expected for their age. They make consistently good progress and, by the time they leave at the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Different groups of pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals and those who speak English as an additional language, make equally good progress. Recent action to ensure that girls make equally good progress in writing has been successful.

All groups of pupils are equally well motivated which contributes to their similarly good levels of achievement. They respond well to high expectations of their behaviour, concentrating well even when working without direct adult supervision. For example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 1 maintained a good pace while applying place value to money, although they did not have an opportunity to extend their learning further by setting a problem of their own. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities work diligently even when they are addressing areas of difficulty for them, such as sequencing numbers or identifying letter sounds. On occasions, behaviour is exceptionally mature; for example pupils in Year 2 enthusiastically responded to music and movement to represent travelling in a time machine, without becoming over-excited or distracted from their focus on vocabulary while learning about other parts of the world.

◆ Pupils work together constructively and sensibly in small groups. Girls and boys take an equal share in scribing their group's ideas, although this is in response to questions set by the teacher, and their learning is not fully extended with a chance to pose their own questions. Pupils demonstrate an exceptionally strong appreciation of values such as 'friendship' and write prayers appealing for an end to 'governments fighting'. They are curious about the world and keen to exchange information about their lives and interests with children in Bangladesh through email messages. They are respectful of the differences they encounter both within school and through links such as these, while also gaining an insight into commonalities of experience. They respond thoughtfully when given an opportunity to consider school improvements, although these opportunities are a little over-directed by adults. Opportunities to implement ideas, such as encouraging

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others to keep healthy, are limited, whereas they designed and displayed safety posters while the school's building project was underway.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between adults and pupils provide the basis for managing pupils' behaviour positively. As a result, learning is seldom disrupted and pupils enjoy school. One pupil told the lead inspector that one of the best things about school is, 'how much we learn'. Consistently good planning addresses pupils' differing needs and encourages pupils to make links between subjects. For instance, work to develop powerful vocabulary was enhanced by its scientific and geographical context. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils receive consistently helpful feedback both during lessons and through marked work which commends their achievements and identifies their 'next steps'. When teaching gives pupils the opportunity to challenge themselves, for example, by identifying different pairs of numbers with a difference of '12', pupils exercise choice and independence and their learning is enhanced.

The curriculum promotes pupils' academic and personal development well. Several parents and carers commended the interesting topics and educational visits that 'really fire the children's imagination'. A recent focus to ensure that topics are equally interesting to boys and girls contributes to their similar achievement. A good variety of activities enrich pupils'

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physical education, reflecting the school's award for promoting healthy lifestyles. Strong links with the church and topics, for example, about children's rights, supported by direct links with children in other parts of the world, enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Issues about keeping safe are deeply embedded in teachers' teaching strategies and in curriculum topics. For instance, in an ICT lesson, pupils are reminded about how to take care of their backs, and science work about electricity includes specific attention to dangers.

◆ The school is extremely nurturing. Its care for individual pupils lies at the heart of its work. Parents and carers remark on how happy their children are. During the inspection, pupils were seen skipping into school enthusiastically. Carefully selected provision is tailored to meet particular needs for individual and small groups of pupils, and regularly adjusted to remain effective. This is a key feature of the school's success in promoting learning for pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities or those facing challenging circumstances. All pupils are known as individuals exceedingly well. This helps staff to ensure that they are well informed about what they do well and where they need to try to improve. The result is friendly, confident pupils who are welcoming to visitors and receptive to new ideas and experiences.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Smooth teamwork between the headteacher, deputy, staff and the governing body maintains a school culture with high expectations of adults and pupils. A close analysis of how well each pupil is doing and any patterns of achievement within different groups is used to inform all staff. This contributes to the outstanding promotion of equality of opportunity. Priorities for development are focused successfully on raising attainment and ensuring equally good progress for all groups of pupils. Potential inequalities are rapidly identified and addressed efficiently before they become significant, for example when it was noted that girls' attainment in writing did not match boys'. The special educational needs coordinator contributes effectively to ongoing evaluation of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so time is not lost on programmes that have little impact. ◆

School staff and the governing body share a commitment to promoting tolerant, responsible and anti-discriminatory attitudes among pupils. Their success is evident in the maturity that pupils demonstrate in their approach to each other, to new experiences and to new learning. Strong links with the church and local community benefit pupils'

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experience, such as through entertaining the local elderly. Their awareness of local community issues helps pupils to make informed choices about their charity work, for example electing to fund-raise for a local children's hospice. International links broaden pupils' horizons because they involve direct links with individual children abroad. The school recognises that the next step is to accelerate the implementation of plans to develop community cohesion at a national level by widening pupils' experience of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom.

◆ The governing body contributes to school improvement effectively because it deploys its strengths strategically. For instance, individual governors with relevant experience are involved in developing the school's use of ICT. Expertise within the governing body contributes to the school's currently outstanding systems for safeguarding pupils. Detailed risk assessments are of a particularly high quality. Documents, such as those related to vetting adults, and a comprehensive range of policies related to daily care, exceed national requirements. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body recognise that, while links with parents and carers remain good, one impact of the recent building work has been to interrupt their planned programme of events with parents and carers. Together, they are planning to rectify this with urgency.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator provides good leadership which contributes to constructive teamwork being established rapidly and previous strengths in the provision being maintained. Children make good progress during their time in the Nursery and/or Reception classes. Opportunities for children to work both inside and outside, with an adult or without direct adult supervision, are good. On occasion, children make outstanding progress when they are working with an adult. During the inspection, children



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made impressive gains in their understanding of why some objects float and others sink because skilful questioning ensured they developed and expressed ideas such as, 'there's more air inside it' while they experimented practically.

Good attention is paid to teaching children the link between letters and sounds. In sessions led by adults, a multi-sensory approach helps children to sustain interest in identifying the three sounds in words such as 'chin' and 'chop'. Teachers make good use of incidental opportunities to reinforce such learning, for example, by ♦ emphasising initial sounds when working with children in the Nursery. Activities available for children to select independently are mostly stimulating, but not all are equally so. Some activities miss opportunities to provide children with greater choice and, therefore, richer learning. Children enjoyed applying physical skills to make crowns, but because strips of paper were provided for them, as were the materials for decorating the crowns, opportunities to use mathematical and creative skills were missed. On other occasions, small groups made good gains in developing their mathematical ideas and social skills when they elected to sort fir cones from shells, or when they experimented with moving large tubes and blocks to construct an outside den.

Children benefit from the outstanding arrangements to keep them safe. Adults set a consistently good example to children of how to behave and to speak with each other, which contributes to their happy enjoyment of school. Children receive a good start to their education in this provision. One parent summed up the views of others, commenting 'My child says school is really, really good.'

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

More parents and carers returned questionnaires than is typical nationally. There was unanimous agreement that children are kept safe. The vast majority agreed that their children enjoy school, are well prepared for the future and that teaching is good. A few parents and carers do not believe that the school deals well with unacceptable behaviour and some had concerns about communication with parents and carers. During this inspection, the inspection team found behaviour to be good and managed well with several channels of communication available to parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John the Evangelist CofE Nursery and Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 133 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 203 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	61	51	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	61	51	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	30	82	62	9	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	40	72	54	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	53	59	44	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	35	70	53	12	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	44	69	52	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	41	66	50	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	38	70	53	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	24	75	56	15	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	23	83	62	12	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	50	38	75	56	6	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	57	51	38	5	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St John the Evangelist C.E. Nursery and Infant School, Newbury RG14 7DE**

We really enjoyed meeting you, hearing your ideas, and seeing your work when we visited your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. I would like to send a big thank you to those of you who met with me and brought special work to show me. You go to a good school and we are pleased that you enjoy it as much as you do. Here are some of the best things we found.

- You make good progress and become better readers, writers and mathematicians than most pupils of your age.
- You feel extremely safe, and know the adults in school take tremendously good care of you.
- All the adults in school work extremely hard to make sure everyone makes similarly good progress.
- You behave well and are kind to each other.
- You are keen to try new activities and experiences and think a lot about important ideas, such as how important friends are, and what is the same and what is different for the children you email in Bangladesh.
- Your teachers, teaching assistants and the governing body work closely together because they want to make your school even better.

We have asked your teachers to give you more chances to set your own challenges in lessons. You told us some of your good ideas for making your school even better. We have asked the adults to make sure you have a chance to put some of your ideas into practice. You can help by continuing to share your ideas sensibly with your teachers. We know they are planning to help you to make links with other children in the United Kingdom who come from backgrounds that are different from yours. We have asked them to get started with these ideas before your Easter holiday.

We hope learning is always so much fun for you.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin Lead inspector

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