

St John Vianney School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106167
Local Authority	
Inspection number	355897
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	David Smith

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	21
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Dr G F Byrne
Headteacher	Mrs Eileen McMorrow
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
School address	Rye Bank Road Firswood, Stretford Manchester, Lancashire M16 0EX
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were observed and 11 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers and support staff, students and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, looked at safeguarding documents, a range of other documentation, students' work and teachers' records. They scrutinised questionnaire returns from students, staff and 53 parents and carers.

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 arrangements for safeguarding.
- Leadership and management at all levels across the school and the capacity for sustained improvement.
- The relevance of the curriculum and the level of challenge provided to meet the students' range of learning needs.
- The collection, evaluation and use of data to personalise learning to meet the students' individual needs.

Information about the school

St John Vianney is a Catholic non-maintained special school and admits students from neighbouring local authorities. It caters for students with moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and an increasing number of students on roll have autistic spectrum disorders. All of the students have a statement of special educational needs. Eight of the students are under the care of the local authority. A large majority of the students are from White British backgrounds with the remainder from a variety of backgrounds. There are twice as many boys as girls on roll. Just over a third of the students are known to be eligible for free school meals. St John Vianney has recently-attained Autism Accreditation. At the time of the inspection some of the classrooms were out of use, because the damage caused by a recent flood was being repaired.

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

St John Vianney is a good school. It is a cohesive and harmonious community, guided by the school's Catholic ethos. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, which has helped the school to make good progress since the last inspection. The staff team works well together, for example, to help the school attain Autism Accreditation, which reflects the school's expertise in their provision for students with autism. The governing body plays a major role in the effective drive for continual improvement. The views of students, parents and carers make a positive contribution to school improvement. Taking all of this into account the school has a good capacity to improve.

Teaching is good and learning is made enjoyable. The staff are enthusiastic and the teaching assistants make a good contribution to the students' good achievement and well-being. The good use of assessment ensures that the students are effectively challenged at each stage of their education. The students' progress in mathematics now matches that of English and science, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. The students respond well to practical and investigative work. However, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects is satisfactory, rather than good. Opportunities are missed to use ICT, for example, to extend the students' management of data. The displays of students' art around the school help to promote an attractive and stimulating environment. The good curriculum is enriched by the provision of a wide range of activities and visits, which help to engage the students in their learning. Good external accreditation opportunities are available for the higher-attaining students.

Care, guidance and support are high quality with a strong focus on the safety and well-being of the students. Attendance is improving strongly but remains average. Relationships are positive and students' behaviour is good, both of which contribute to the cohesive and harmonious school community. The mature and positive attitudes of the sixth-form students prove that they deserve their high status in the school. The school's partnerships are good. This includes the positive work with parents and carers and other agencies to promote good opportunities for the students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the use of ICT in all subjects is effective by:
 - providing relevant training for the staff in the use of ICT
 - ensuring the effective use of ICT in all classrooms to support learning.
- Raise the students' attendance from average to above average by:
 - developing rigorous procedures to encourage good attendance

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- developing a whole-school approach to the promotion of good attendance
- the allocation of personal mentors to students with low attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The students make good progress in their learning and their achievement is good. Their targets are matched to their individual needs and are ambitious. The school compares their progress to students with similar learning needs, which is a good development since the last inspection. There is no gender variation in progress and the students in public care achieve in line with their peers. Higher-ability students are able to access accredited courses when they are in the senior part of the school and this helps them to make good progress. Art is used well to promote good progress in literacy and numeracy. In an art lesson observed during the inspection, students were very focused and made good progress in their ability to work independently. In a physical education lesson, the students made good progress in developing their skills to play badminton and showed a good understanding of the tactics and rules of the game. In a religious education lesson, students were able to discuss sensitive issues in a mature and sensible manner. In an ICT lesson, the pupils made good progress in the use of new technology to produce their own advertisement to promote healthy eating.

The students enjoy school and form positive friendships. Attendance is improving strongly and most students attend well but the low attendance of a very few students limits attendance to average. By the time the students leave the school, they have made marked progress in their personal development and are effectively prepared for the next stage of their education. They work well in teams and have a positive work ethic. The students' behaviour in class and around the school is good. They display a high level of respect for each other and the staff, which contributes to the positive relationships across the school. Students are aware of the benefits of a healthy diet and have a good understanding of why exercise is so important. The students enjoy the high-quality, varied and healthy food provided by the school.

The students' spiritual development is excellent and the other aspects of their moral, social and cultural development are good. The celebration assemblies at the end of the week are exceptional. The school community shares in a genuine celebration of students' achievements during the week and the students respond very well to the time devoted to quiet reflection. Widening cultural development is evident in the high-quality displays and the school is increasingly involved with schools from other countries. The students are actively involved in a good range of fund-raising activities, which reflects their positive contribution to the community.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment ¹	
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is enthusiastic, with high expectations, and provides activities that are effectively tailored to meet the students' individual needs. Teaching assistants support and challenge learning well and make a good contribution to on-going assessment. In a very small minority of lessons, students make satisfactory progress. This is because the pace of learning is too slow and the students are passive rather than actively engaged. However, in a few lessons students make outstanding progress because teaching is inspirational. In these lessons a very wide range of strategies are used to keep the students fully engaged and, as a result, their learning needs are met exceptionally well.

The good curriculum is designed to meet the complex needs of individuals and groups of students. The school has responded well to the challenges of educating an increasing number of students with autism. It provides clear structures for these students but also ensures that their curriculum is stimulating. There is a good focus on developing the students' literacy and numeracy skills, but only a satisfactory use of ICT in other subjects. The good enrichment and extension activities provide valuable opportunities to enhance learning. Displays around the school celebrate the students' achievement and highlight

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their involvement in a wide range of activities and visits. This includes visits to local museums, a local ecology park and construction sites.

Good care, support and guidance are embedded in the school's work and these help the students to feel safe and enjoy their time in school. Members of staff know the students well and effectively target a blend of support and challenge to enable them to access a good range of inclusive activities. Professionals with a wide range of expertise are integrated into the work of the school and ensure that students' individual needs are met. Challenging behaviour is managed with confidence and sensitivity by the staff. The vast majority of parents and carers are confident that the school helps to support their children's learning. The school needs to be more rigorous in its approach to promoting attendance in order to move attendance from average to above average. Although students with low attendance receive good support generally, they do not have a mentor to encourage them to attend regularly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership and is well-supported by other senior leaders and the staff team. The team is committed to improvement and demonstrates a strong commitment to equality and to the celebration of diversity. The governing body provides an effective balance of support and challenge in the drive for continual improvement. There is an effective focus on ensuring that the school provides good value for money. The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the school's good safeguarding procedures, which fully meet requirements and permeate the ethos of the school. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning. Good performance management procedures provide a clear focus for staff training and development but additional training is required in the use of ICT. The school works well with a wide range of partners and this helps the students to make good progress in their learning and in their well-being. The school plans and promotes its approach to community cohesion well. A strong feature is the inclusion of students, parents and carers in the process of school improvement so that all feel valued and part of the school community. The school has developed successful links with other schools both nationally and globally.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Sixth form

Teaching and learning are good and the students thoroughly enjoy their time at the school. Teaching is enthusiastic and the students are effectively challenged by the staff's high expectations. The staff team works particularly well together and this helps to develop a particularly strong work ethic among the students. In a mathematics lesson the students made good progress in producing an accurate graph. However, opportunities were lost to use ICT to extend the students' skills in the management of their data. The students' attitude to learning in the lesson was excellent. The good curriculum prepares the students well for the next stage of their education. The activities are matched to their age and the good, but not outstanding, range of accredited courses is responsive to individual needs. The staff team ensures that the students are treated as young adults, which helps to promote good progress in their independent learning. A student commented that he would appreciate even more trust to do independent activities. Good opportunities are provided for work-related learning and enterprise activities. For example, students prepare and serve excellent meals in their café. The students talked very enthusiastically about their activities especially their residential trips, which make such a positive contribution to their good achievement.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire are positive about the school. There was a high percentage of questionnaires returned. Typical comments from parents and carers include, 'the school environment endorses inclusive learning' and 'there is a very strong parent and carer relationship with the staff'. The inspection report indicates agreement with the responses and comments from 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 Vianney 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 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 89 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	60	16	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	66	13	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	57	15	28	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	45	21	40	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	58	12	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	40	19	36	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	38	21	40	0	0	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)	20	38	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	45	17	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	45	18	34	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	40	21	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	53	14	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	57	10	19	0	0	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).

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



28 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of St John Vianney School, Manchester, M16 0EX

We enjoyed our visit to your good school and spending time looking at your work. Thank you for the time spent with us discussing your activities and views about the school. I hope that you are successful in persuading the staff to organise some football matches for you with students in other schools. The food served in the school is very high quality but particular thanks to the students who prepared and served our excellent lunch in the café.

St John Vianney is a good school. It is clear that you enjoy attending and we were pleased with your positive behaviour. All the staff work hard to ensure that you are looked after well. We think that your wide range of activities and trips help you to make good progress. In particular, your residential trips sound very exciting. Also, your celebration assembly at the end of the week was excellent.

We have asked the headteacher, senior management team, staff and governors to work together to make your school even better. This includes helping to improve your attendance so that more of you have good attendance. Also, we would like to see an increase in the use of ICT in your lessons to make learning even more exciting.

You can help by ensuring that you attend whenever possible, work hard and maintain your positive attitudes. As agreed in the celebration assembly the headteacher will read out this letter to you.

Yours sincerely,

David Smith

Lead inspector

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