

St John's Stonefold CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119453
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358557
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Coleman HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Roger Smith
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Oldfield
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons taught by six different teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority, senior staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation including data showing pupils' attainment and progress, policies, the minutes of the governing body, reports from the School Improvement Partner, safeguarding records and pupils' work. Questionnaires were scrutinised from a sample of pupils and from 44 parents and carers.

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

- Have leaders at all levels, including the governing body, successfully tackled the points for improvement identified at the last inspection?
- What is the impact of the school's actions to improve the progress made by boys, especially in English?
- Is the quality of teaching and learning providing consistently well for all pupils across different classes and subjects?

Information about the school

This is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is situated on the edge of a residential area adjoining open farmland. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average and for those who have a statement of special educational needs it is average.

The school's previous inspection in December 2009 judged that significant improvement was needed to the school's performance and a Notice to Improve was given.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The headteacher, effectively supported by staff and the governing body, has ensured significant improvement to the school's provision and, as a result, outcomes for pupils' learning are satisfactory and for their personal development mostly good. Robust monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, rigorous tracking of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics and systematic evaluation of the outcomes lead to leaders' secure and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, the governing body is well-informed about the school's performance. Ambitious targets are set for school improvement and there is a shared commitment by all staff to achieving this. The school's capacity to improve is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving. Previous staffing instability is mostly resolved and is helping to improve the consistency of provision. Teachers' planning largely ensures that assessment information about pupils' prior attainment is used well so that lessons are suitably challenging for most pupils. Pupils are knowledgeable about their targets for learning and say this encourages them to achieve more highly. However, there are variations across classes and subjects in the quality of teaching, use of assessment and the rate of pupils' progress. For example, pupils' progress in English is not as strong as in mathematics and boys do not make as much progress as girls. The school has some effective strategies in place to tackle these issues, such as developing boy-friendly graphic literature and subscribing to magazines about practical subjects. These help to capture boys' interest and bridge the gap between early reading picture books and those with only text. It is too soon to measure the full impact on boys' attainment, but a sound start has been made and rates of progress are improving.

Since the last inspection the school has successfully focused on improving pupils' skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy. There is much less attention paid to pupils' learning in science. Around the school and in classrooms there is little sign of the science curriculum, with an absence of displays of pupils' science work. The subject is given too little prominence and pupils' progress in this subject is not monitored as rigorously as in other core subjects.

The classroom learning environment for the Early Years Foundation Stage is cluttered and does not facilitate children's independent learning particularly well. While the provision is satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses in the rigour and quality of assessment and recording systems to ensure that children's progress is monitored effectively.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - - immediately reviewing the classroom learning environment and reorganising the layout of resources and equipment
 - - ensuring that children's independent learning is successfully developed
 - - providing a bright stimulating classroom
 - - improving assessment and recording systems so that children's progress is rigorously monitored and evaluated.
- Raise the profile of science throughout the school by:
 - - ensuring that classroom displays have as much prominence for science as other core subjects
 - - regularly monitoring pupils' progress and attainment in science.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

As a result of mostly satisfactory teaching over time, from starting points in Reception which are similar to those found nationally, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Rates of progress are improving because the quality of teaching is getting better. In lessons seen during the inspection the majority resulted in pupils making at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress. Work in pupils' books shows that progress this year is accelerating. School data show that in some year groups, such as Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have made good progress since the start of the year. This is not yet consistent across the school and other year groups make largely satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other groups of pupils.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and this makes a good contribution to their progress in learning. Attendance is above average and pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe because adults care for them. There is a good range of sporting opportunities and many pupils take part, which shows their commitment to developing a healthy lifestyle. Pupils take on extra responsibilities as they get older, such as by being a member of the school council or as a playground buddy. Basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory and pupils are sufficiently well equipped to begin the next phase of education when they move on to secondary school. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on contemporary issues through regular assemblies which provide a strong Christian and moral code. Staff provide good role models and pupils learn about cooperation and consideration for everyone's views. Pupils raise funds for local and national charities; for example, they exchange letters with young people in a school in Texas, USA and are developing links with a neighbouring school whose pupils are of mostly minority ethnic origins.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Leaders' monitoring of lessons shows that the quality of teaching and learning is mostly satisfactory. The proportion of good lessons is increasing. Inspection evidence confirms this view. In observed lessons most pupils made satisfactory or good progress as a result of clear objectives for pupils' learning, pupils' positive attitudes and teachers' high expectations of the progress pupils make. In good lessons teachers use effective questioning techniques to build pupils' knowledge and understanding and they check this is secure before moving learning on. In satisfactory lessons teachers give too many instructions or ask too many questions without giving pupils enough time to think and reflect. There is variation in the way the classroom learning environment contributes to pupils' learning. In some classrooms good use is made of displays and the organisation of captions, key vocabulary and resources to encourage independent enquiry. This is not consistent across the school and some classrooms are untidily resourced. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is thorough and often provides useful feedback about how to improve.

The curriculum provision ensures that pupils acquire sound basic skills. Science is less evident than other core subjects. Provision to promote pupils' reading and phonic skills is improving. A good partnership with a local high school helps to enrich provision for teaching a modern foreign language, for example, whereby Years 2 to 6 have one lesson per week taught by a visiting teacher. A number of visitors, including the school nurse, the

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local mayor and the local vicar, also add first-hand experiences to pupils' learning. Visits are made to places of educational interest including a residential opportunity at an outward bound centre. Many extra-curricular clubs are offered in sport and music. In Key Stage 1, Wednesday afternoons provide creative lessons in art, drama and music and this widens pupils' curriculum experiences.

Safeguarding arrangements are good and ensure that pupils feel safe. Pupils' needs are quickly identified through the school's effective tracking systems. Intervention programmes are in place to support extra needs. The special educational needs leader provides good, regular assessments which enable teachers to devise effective individual education plans which target specific learning needs for pupils. These are increasing the rate of progress made by these pupils. Good arrangements are in place which provide opportunities to ease pupils' transition to secondary schools. Staff training in first aid and child protection ensures effective provision for pupils' well-being. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of pupils, for example, on the school playground at the start of the day. Pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development are well provided for through specific curriculum programmes. They are further enhanced in assemblies, opportunities for collective worship and by participation in external support such as the 'life education caravan' visit.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a clear steer for school improvement. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who shares his ambition. All staff embrace change and improvement very positively. The governing body are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. They have an accurate view of the school due to the rigorous and effective monitoring of the senior leaders and the developing role of middle leaders. The governing body provides a good level of challenge, as seen in the minutes of meetings. Leaders have successfully improved the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection and ensured that pupils receive at least a satisfactory quality of education. Nevertheless, weaknesses remain and achievement is satisfactory, not good. The weakness in the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is of particular note. Reassuringly, leaders' evaluations include clear identification of these issues and plans are in place, with the support of the local authority, to improve these aspects.

Arrangements for safeguarding ensure thorough vetting of all staff appointments, regular risk assessments of the school premises and up-to-date training for designated staff such as the child protection leader. Plans for community cohesion show developing links locally,

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but the evaluation of the wider impact of the school's work, such as the link with an American school, lacks depth and rigour. Leaders ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity, as shown by the similar rates of progress for pupil groups and the determined efforts to improve boys' achievement in English.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with skills which are similar to children of the same age nationally. They say they like school and enjoy learning. Children show enthusiasm and readily engage in classroom activities. For example, children were seen making gingerbread men in the sandpit while another group drew gingerbread men in sparkly dust. As a result, children make satisfactory progress in their learning, knowledge and skills, especially in their social and language development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally satisfactory progress. Overall, girls make slightly better progress than boys.

Risk assessments are in place; staff are suitably trained for working with young children and safeguarding requirements are fully met. Adults work well together, providing good levels of care and satisfactory teaching and learning. Satisfactory assessment systems are in place but are untidily organised and managed. The classroom learning environment is cluttered. It is not bright and stimulating and does little to inspire or excite children to learn. The outside environment is satisfactory and provides all-weather availability for extra activities.

Teachers' planning provides adequately for individual children's needs. There is a satisfactory balance of adult-led tasks and child-initiated activities, but children do not always get the most from their independent activities because of the weak organisation of resources and equipment. Behaviour is good and is the result of positive praise from staff,

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which supports children's development. There are good relationships between children and staff. Adults recognise the personal and social needs of every child and these are well met. Effective links with parents and carers enhance the work in the setting.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About one third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most are supportive of the school's work. The main area of concern is the amount of progress made by pupils and this issue is explored in the report. Also, a significant number of replies claimed that the school does not keep parents and carers informed about progress or that parents and carers do not feel they are helped by the school to support their children's learning. The school does offer meetings to discuss pupils' progress and annual reports are sent home. Regular newsletters give information about school events. However, inspectors judge that the school could do more to help parents and carers understand how best to support their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's Stonefold CofE Primary 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	55	18	41	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	45	21	48	3	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	6	14	27	61	10	23	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	30	16	36	12	27	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	16	36	24	55	3	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	30	17	39	10	23	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	39	22	50	4	9	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)	12	27	24	55	3	7	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	25	22	50	6	14	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	30	21	48	5	11	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	30	20	45	5	11	4	9
The school is led and managed effectively	17	39	15	34	3	7	6	14
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	34	21	48	3	7	1	2

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.



4 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's Stonefold CofE Primary School, Accrington, BB5 2SW

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team into your school when we visited you recently. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and would like to share with you what we found out about your school. We judged that St John's Stonefold CofE Primary is a satisfactory school and no longer causes concern. These are the main reasons why we judged the school to be satisfactory.

- The headteacher, staff and the governing body are improving your school in many areas.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory and you make satisfactory progress so that you reach average standards in your learning.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and behave well.
- Staff take good care of you.
- Many of you take part in sporting activities and everyone is learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

All schools need to develop and improve and we have asked that science is given more importance in your school. Also, we have pointed out that the classroom and assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage need improving.

Thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Coleman

Her Majesty's Inspector

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