

St John's, Gosport Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116393
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357955
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Brian Evans

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	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Channon
Headteacher	Joy Lowman
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 19 lessons and parts of lessons and observed 14 teachers. Meetings took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and a number of staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at documentation, which included the school strategic plan, assessment information, safeguarding documentation, curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the results of 62 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and took account of the views expressed in the pupils' questionnaires

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

- Inspectors evaluated the impact of policies on improving writing.
- They explored the effect of strategies implemented to improve attendance.
- The team considered the impact of subject leaders on sustaining school improvement.

Information about the school

St John's, Gosport Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is larger than most primary schools. There is a breakfast and after-school club, which is managed by the school and as such is included in this inspection. The great majority of pupils are from White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially moderate learning difficulties, is well above average, as is the proportion with statements of special educational needs. A few arrive with behavioural difficulties, including some who transfer from other schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The movement of pupils into and out of the school other than at the normal times is higher than in most schools. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

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's, Gosport Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a good school. Since the last inspection, when it was deemed satisfactory, it has made good progress under the leadership of the headteacher and the strong group of leaders and managers. Attendance and the achievement of higher-ability pupils were issues in the last inspection and these have been successfully addressed by the school. The focus is firmly on promoting good equality of opportunity for pupils. The success of good interventions in relation to pupils' learning and progress show the school has good capacity for sustained development.

- The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced. As a result of the school's rigorous efforts, attendance is now at the national average. The school gives a clear and consistent message to parents, carers and pupils about the importance of attending school and the link with achievement.
- Self-evaluation procedures are good and the school's improvement plan is rigorously reviewed by the governing body. The range of expertise on the governing body has supported the rise in the school's achievement.
- Attainment is at the national average. Provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the more able is good. Current achievement in writing is good throughout the school for all groups of pupils, including potentially vulnerable pupils.
- Subject leaders manage the school's assessment and tracking systems well and monitor the individual performance of pupils carefully. The improved writing and mathematics attainment have led to a good start in applying these skills across the curriculum.
- Teaching and learning are good overall but there is occasionally a little inconsistency between good and satisfactory in teaching English and mathematics. This is because teachers sometimes introduce lessons/topics at great length or because the tasks set are not at the right levels for pupils to participate. Good teaching promotes pupils' learning well. In the best of good and outstanding lessons, the pace of learning is maintained and pupils support each other well and reflect effectively on their own learning. The school is working to increase the proportion of outstanding lessons.
- Pupils' good progress in learning basic academic skills is aided by the well-established partnerships with external agencies and good relationships with parents and carers. The work of the homeschool liaison worker supports pupils and families well.
- The good personal development of pupils is a key element in supporting their good achievement. Effective reward systems are in place for maintaining good behaviour and attendance.

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

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- Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community life, although their understanding of the diversity of communities and cultures in the United Kingdom and overseas is not so well developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - lifting the quality of any satisfactory teaching to become good, making sure that all pupils' needs are more carefully and consistently met and by ensuring that pupils do not sit listening to the teacher for too long
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding lessons
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to understand the diversity of communities and cultures and interact with other groups within the United Kingdom and overseas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills below those expected for their age. From this point they make good progress in their learning, so that their attainment is at the expected level by the time that they leave the school. Attainment has steadily risen in English and mathematics over the past three years. Pupils' achievement is also reflected in their enjoyment of school and in their hard work.

Pupils are helped to use their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum, as seen, for example, in a Year 3 geography lesson on deforestation when pupils linked their learning with other areas of the curriculum. Effective team work by staff ensures that learning is interesting for pupils. A parent or carer commented, 'Teachers in Years 3 to 6 work together as a phase to support each other there is excellent support for newly qualified teachers.'

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because there is good practice in setting tasks that match their learning needs. For example, in an outstanding Year 1 writing lesson, pupils learned exceptionally well because they behaved very well, showed engagement and benefited from high quality support for all levels of ability. Pupils knew their targets and responded to them well. Pupils concentrate well and persevere, as seen in two good Year 6 lessons when pupils were preparing for their national tests (SATs) the next day. Strong monitoring and support of teachers by senior leaders and managers is tackling any instances of occasional variability in the rate of pupils' learning.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered in welcoming visitors to the school. Assemblies raise pupils' self-esteem and have helped build their confidence to speak publicly at these and other events. Years 3 to 6 sang very well in assembly and were well supported by teachers and adults. Pupils respond thoughtfully to opportunities for reflection.

The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development has many very strong features. All pupils are happy and play and learn well together and they enjoy artistic and cultural activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good rather than outstanding because the school is correctly extending opportunities for pupils to learn more about the diversity of communities and cultures within the United Kingdom and overseas.

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◆ The pupils' rising achievement in basic skills, including updating the school website, is ensuring they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. A few pupils perceive that pupils who do not always behave appropriately have the greater focus and that their good behaviour is not always recognised and celebrated as much as they would like. They can discuss what food and exercise they need for adopting healthy lifestyles.

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	3
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	3
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

How effective is the provision?

Work is usually matched carefully to pupils' learning needs, although in a very few classes there is not always enough attention given to matching the task to different groups of pupils. Assessment is based on accurate tracking of their progress. Pupils know what they have to do. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to learning, either by their work in 'boosting' individual skills in withdrawal groups or by in-class support. In a very good Year 1 mathematics lesson there were different tasks for higher, middle and lower attainers. All tasks were challenging and highly engaging and well designed to enable all pupils to make good progress. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the class teacher used good practical activities on the reflection of images. Other adults were effectively deployed to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils understand the importance of assessing their own work and that of others through the 'talking partners' routines.

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Interior spaces are bright and attractive. Specialist spaces, inside the school, are used well, including the impressively equipped music room and information and communication technology (ICT) learning area. There are two vegetable patches and a shallow pond in the wooded area which are planted and respected by all children. The premises manager showed a group of six pupils how to transplant a potted plant and clearly takes a great interest in entering the school for the borough-in-bloom show. The breakfast club and after-school club contribute much to the all-round care of pupils. These are well managed and very popular with children and received much praise from parents and carers in their questionnaire comments. Pupils go on residential visits from Year 3 onwards. The curriculum motivates and engages pupils well. The St John's University on Friday afternoons is very popular with pupils. It raises their aspirations and they choose which activities they want to do. Participation levels are very high in extra-curricular activities. All pupils enjoy numerous visits and visitors, which make learning meaningful. The good partnership with external agencies contributes to their good achievement. Teachers and support staff provide good care, guidance and support and work regularly alongside parents and carers to improve pupils' basic skills. The homeschool liaison officer is very effective and, working closely with the special educational needs coordinator, she organises many valuable sessions for parents and carers in school time.

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 senior leaders and managers work very closely with the headteacher. The headteacher is a strong, motivating force throughout the school and is very successful in taking all staff with her when driving improvement. A pupil commented, 'The headteacher and deputy always do a great job.' The impact of good leadership by senior managers can be seen in the good progress made by pupils and the creation of a school ethos that is friendly, welcoming and mutually supportive. Statutory duties are reviewed regularly and meet requirements, including the good procedures relating to safeguarding. The protection of children is embedded in all aspects of school life. Policies and their impact on child protection are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that they reflect best practice and are followed consistently by all staff. Concerted action to promote equal opportunities and the effective tackling of any discrimination leads to harmony across all ethnic groups and has improved the performance of all groups of pupils, especially those who need additional support.

Professional support and staff training days are regularly used to raise awareness of teaching and curriculum issues and to improve practice. Parents and carers are well

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informed and engaged in their child's learning through newsletters and other communication; especially through the homeschool liaison officer.

◆ The governing body carefully examines the impact of policies on the school's work and effectively holds the school to good account for its performance. The promotion and impact of community cohesion has some excellent features in terms of the local community. Pupils also study and understand that communities and cultures in other parts of the world can be different. An understanding of the diversity of lifestyles within the United Kingdom and overseas is not as well developed.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

- The two Reception classes in one open-plan setting have a very welcoming environment. They are bright and colourful with a clear focus on learning. An excellent outdoor area complements and is used well in pupils' move freely between the indoors and outside.
- An inclusive ethos and an open-door policy engage parents and carers well in their children's learning. Behaviour is good and parents and carers say children are safe.
- Enjoyment and attitudes to learning are good because activities are exciting and really engage the children. For example, both Reception classes saw chicks emerge from their eggs and, with guidance from teachers, weighed a sample of the chicks daily and analysed their weight.
- In sessions directed by adults, children sit and listen for just the right amount of time before they go on to choose further activities for themselves. Children enthusiastically join in with actions with the teachers' story telling. They have good opportunities to lead in their learning activities.

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- ◆ Assessment and annotation of 'Learning Profiles' are thorough and support learning. Attendance is good and supports the good ethos and relationships in the setting.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with appropriate visual support from all classroom assistants and teachers. The leaders have a good knowledge of the children which supports their learning effectively. Partnerships with outside agencies are good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A well-below-average proportion of families returned questionnaires. In their responses almost all parents and carers state that their children enjoy school and feel very safe. The majority of parents and carers were positive about the school and its impact on their children's well-being. The quality of pastoral care, the curriculum, and opportunities for extra-curricular activities were highly praised. Parents and carers and pupils indicated both orally and in their questionnaires that their perception is that the school focuses too much on those pupils who do not consistently behave well. The school has developed effective strategies to address this perception. During the inspection, inspectors saw no instances of unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's, Gosport Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 372 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	45	33	53	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	53	23	37	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	39	33	53	5	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	45	27	44	6	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	45	30	48	2	3	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	35	33	53	7	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	37	31	50	3	5	2	3
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	32	29	47	8	13	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	32	29	47	8	13	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	40	30	48	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	18	23	37	14	23	10	16
The school is led and managed effectively	19	31	30	48	5	8	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	40	27	44	2	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



12 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's, Gosport Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary, Gosport PO12 4HJ

We are writing to let you know how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. You will be pleased to learn that we judge St John's Primary to be a good school. These are the main findings of the inspection. We found that the school does many things well for you, which helps you to be happy and successful learners.

- You are making good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- You have a good understanding of adopting healthy lifestyles. You participate in a full range of physical education activities.
- The good levels of care, guidance and support provided by the school allow you to flourish as learners and develop good levels of independence.
- The partnerships between the school, your parents and carers, outside agencies and yourselves are good.
- Teaching is good.
- There is a good environment for learning in the Reception and Year 1 classes.
- You support the St John's University scheme very well. You choose your activity on Friday afternoons and most of you say that it lifts your aspirations, which is great!

Over the past year you have made good progress in mathematics and in writing. We have asked the school to build on this good start and for teachers to set you appropriate tasks according your levels of ability across all years. We have also asked the school to help you learn more about areas of the United Kingdom and overseas which are different to your own. You can all help by continuing to work with your teachers and all adults to maintain your enthusiastic approach to learning.

Yours sincerely ♦♦♦♦♦♦

Brian Evans

Lead inspector

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