

# Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School, Wigston, Leicestershire

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120217
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	363919
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Edwards

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Stanley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Hirst
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Shenley Road Wigston LE18 3QL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 288 2203
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<b>Email address</b>	office@stjohnfisher-wigston.leics.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Ten lessons and seven teachers were observed. Inspectors scrutinised policies, analysed data, looked at pupils' work and talked to them about it. The team also studied school improvement plans and governing body minutes and met parents, carers and representatives of the governing body. Questionnaire returns were considered from 94 parents and carers. The views of staff and pupils were also taken into consideration.

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

- What are the reasons for the differences in attainment between pupils, particularly for girls in mathematics and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- How effectively leaders and managers are raising pupil achievement.
- The effectiveness of the school procedures to enable pupils to take control of their own learning
- Can the impact of improvements in the teaching of mathematics be seen in raising attainment across the school, particularly in Key Stage 1 and for girls and more-able pupil?

## Information about the school

St John Fisher Catholic Primary is a smaller than average school. The majority pupils are of White British or Indian heritage. The proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is lower than seen nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is slightly above the national average, but the proportion of pupils who have a statement of educational needs is slightly lower than in other schools. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for children in the Reception class. The school provides a breakfast club for pupils. A small minority of pupils transfer to high school at the end of Year 5 and this can be as high as a quarter of the cohort. The remainder transfer to high school at the end of Year 6. The school organises a breakfast club for pupils.

**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 Fisher provides a good standard of education for its pupils. As one parent said, 'I feel my children have thrived at the school.' Pupil achievement is good, in response to good teaching. This includes those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attainment is above the national average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Current work in lessons and the school's assessment and tracking data show that standards are rising in Key Stage 1, where attainment is now in line with the national average. However, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing, reading and mathematics in Year 2 remain below average because of a lack of challenge for the most-able pupils. Children get off to a good start in the Reception class where they make at least good progress in all the areas of learning. The good quality of provision and leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins children's good outcomes.

Good practice in upper Key Stage 2 demonstrates the good progress that pupils can make when teaching is well planned and challenging and activities are well matched to pupils' needs. In some classes, however, teaching is still not of a high enough quality for all pupils to make the real improvements in their learning that are needed to raise standards to a higher level. Some teaching lacks pace and in satisfactory lessons teachers' use of questioning does not offer pupils enough challenge to stimulate their thinking or accelerate their progress. There are some good examples of marking to guide pupils to their next steps in learning. However, such practice is inconsistent across the school. It is more effective in English than in mathematics, and pupils are not always given the opportunity to assess the quality of their own work or that of their peers. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, but is not planned robustly enough to help pupils to make connections between different subjects to accelerate their progress further.

All aspects of pupils' personal development are good. They feel very safe in school and do their best to keep healthy. Pupils behave well. They have positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy school. Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Cultural development is not as highly developed as the other three aspects but the school has good plans to develop this area further. Good partnerships, particularly with neighbouring schools, make an effective contribution to pupils' learning and well-being.

Through good links with parents and carers and good partnerships with a range of outside agencies, the school provides good support for pupils with specific needs and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

The good leadership record, together with its accurate self-evaluation has led to the rising attainment in Key Stage 1 and is influencing positively upon the rise in standards in mathematics and writing across the school for both boys and girls. These factors,

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combined with the good progress since the last inspection, underpin the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to consistently good or better across the school to raise attainment further, particularly at Key Stage 1 by:
  - further embedding the good practice in writing
  - ensuring that marking across the school consistently informs pupils how well they are doing and the next steps to take to improve further, particularly in mathematics
  - increase the pace of teaching to accelerate pupil progress
  - always using effective questioning to challenge pupils' thinking
  - ensuring that the more-able pupils are always appropriately challenged.
- Plan and implement a more coherent, vibrant and relevant, thematic and skills-based curriculum by:
  - ensuring that it helps pupils to make links between different subjects to accelerate pupil progress
  - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their skills across the curriculum.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter Year 1 with attainment which is broadly average. They are making satisfactory progress during their time in Key Stage 1 and although this is improving, attainment remains broadly average by the end of Year 2 because more-able pupils are not being sufficiently stretched. The overall picture of attainment when pupils leave at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. The significant improvement in reading, writing and mathematics in particular, persuasively shown by the Year 6 leavers in 2010, is starting to be replicated lower down the school by boys and girls alike. This good progress was evident in lessons, for example, in one very good Year 6 poetry lesson. In this lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring imagery and the use of similes and metaphors. Their clear articulation when expressing their ideas about the poetry demonstrated their good speaking and listening skills. Spelling was accurate and handwriting mostly well presented.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who have English as an additional language are making good progress because of the well-targeted support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Activities are well planned and consistently meet their learning needs. Pupils' outcomes are regularly reviewed and new individual education plans and targets set to ensure they stay on course to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Although up to one quarter of the Year 5 cohort may transfer to high school, the good work of the school minimises the impact this could have on the progress of those remaining to ensure that attainment remains above average by the end of Year 6.

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Pupils contribute to their good progress through their positive attitudes to work and their good behaviour which make an effective contribution to their learning. They try hard to do their best work and fully subscribe to classroom routines and expectations for learning. In a very safe family environment, pupils develop their personal and social skills well. The thoughtful and caring way they support each other, together with their good behaviour, reflects the genuine respect and friendship for each other. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to exercise responsibility. The good work of the school council and the playground buddies are prime examples. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe, both in school and in everyday life. Pupils feel safe from bullying, and if they have concerns they know who to go to and are confident that they will be dealt with promptly. They understand the need to eat healthily and to take exercise regularly. Many take part in the wide range of sporting activities available in the clubs on offer after school. Sport is a strength of the school and this is reflected in the pupils' success in sporting competitions. Pupils gain considerably in their learning and personal development from their many links with the local community, for example at the masses and celebrations they attend at the local church and their links with a provider for pupils with multiple learning difficulties. Good attendance, the many opportunities created in school to encourage teamwork, the good basic skills of pupils including information and communication technology, and opportunities to fund-raise for a variety of worthy causes, mean that pupils are well prepared for the future.

*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>2</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

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## How effective is the provision?

Good teaching and learning is successfully securing the good progress that pupils are making. In good lessons, pupils knowledge of and ability to use success criteria enable them to take control of their own learning. A good example of this was an upper Key Stage 2 English lesson on play scripts. Pupils used a variety of drama and role play techniques to engage and challenge them and accelerate their learning. Teachers also use multi-sensory teaching and day-to-day assessments effectively to match tasks to pupils' needs. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are knowledgeable about their targets and often have a clear view of how to make their work even better, but this practice is not fully embedded across the school. Teaching assistants are well briefed and deployed and they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Some marking is good where teachers make very clear to pupils what they need to do to improve and give them time to respond to comments made and assess the quality of work of other members of the class. This good practice is not evident throughout the school.

A range of good extra-curricular activities and clubs, such as dance and Gaelic football, and a range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. However, the curriculum is not planned in a robust and coherent way through a thematic and skills based-approach to allow pupils to make the links between subjects and accelerate their progress further.

Staff know pupils very well and they are always on hand to help them when they are having difficulties with their learning or when they are troubled. The well-attended breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day. The activities that pupils undertake there meet their needs and add to the good, care, guidance and support they receive. Transition arrangements to the secondary schools are good and ensure a smooth passage from primary to secondary education.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior and middle leaders, together with the governing body, are successful in driving improvement to meet challenging targets for pupils. They rigorously monitor the schools' work, including teaching and learning, carrying out a thorough analysis of outcomes to develop well-focused plans. Self-evaluation is fair, honest and accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses and acting upon them to improve pupils' education. For example, local authority expertise is used well to improve the teaching of communication, language and literacy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the work with outside providers has had a positive impact on raising standards in writing and mathematics. This

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is raising pupil attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1 and girls' mathematical ability is now as good as that of boys across the school. Expectations for learning are high, as is staff morale. The governing body take great pride in their responsibilities and fulfil their duties with considerable expertise. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are involved in evaluating the quality of provision and planning for improvement. They are thorough in ensuring that arrangements to safeguard pupils are fully in place. The school is vigilant in ensuring all staff are properly vetted to work with children and it goes the extra mile to protect pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

The school works extremely well to meet the needs of pupils through effective links with outside agencies. Specialist teaching support and specially designed resources and equipment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are helping pupils to be fully included in all aspects of their education and learning. The school has successfully ensured equality of opportunity is a right for all pupils. This is evident in the good progress made by all groups of pupils. Good use of resources, including teaching assistants, helps pupils to attain well and represents good value for money. The school is an extremely cohesive community which links well with the local community to provide meaningful learning experiences for pupils. The newly forged links with a school in Ghana is beginning to enhance pupils' understanding of the life and cultures of other people around the world, though the school acknowledges there is still more to do in this area. It has well-focused plans to achieve this.

Through regular newsletters, the termly parents' evenings, the written reports, curriculum guidance leaflets, curriculum subject workshops and the 'open door' policy, parents have every opportunity to recognise how well their children are doing and to link with the school in developing them as learners and young people.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below that generally expected for children of their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. Staff work well to ensure that children settle quickly. Behaviour is good and children demonstrate real enjoyment in their learning. They make good progress in each of the areas of learning and join Year 1 with attainment that is broadly in line with national averages. All staff offer the children good teaching and learning experiences to accelerate their progress. A good example of this is the improvement in the early writing skills of both boys and girls.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a happy place where children settle quickly and thrive in the very secure and well-ordered environment. Children have access to a wide range of activities which meet their needs in most areas of learning. There is a good balance between indoor and outdoor learning which provides creative learning experiences for children. This provision is well managed. Staff regularly share information about individual children to ensure that children are cared for effectively. Use of assessment to match activities to childrens' needs is good, as shown by the good progress that all groups of learners make. The school now has plans to make planning and assessment even more robust to accelerate pupil progress further.

*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

Parents and carers are very happy with most aspects of the school. They feel that the school keeps their children extremely safe and that their children enjoy coming to school. The great majority also believe that teaching is good in the school and that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with challenging behaviour. Inspectors judge that the behaviour of all pupils, in lessons and around the school, was good. Those pupils who find school challenging receive good care, guidance and support.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School, Wigston, Leicestershire 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	70	25	27	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	77	82	17	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	52	43	46	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	59	37	39	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	64	33	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	52	40	43	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	60	36	38	2	2	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)	57	61	31	33	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	57	34	36	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	52	36	38	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	48	42	45	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	65	69	27	29	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	71	24	26	2	2	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	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](http://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"> <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.**



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School, Wigston,  
Leicestershire, LE18 3QL**

Thank you all for making us so very welcome and for answering all our questions when we visited your school recently. We think that yours is a good school and that all the help you receive from the teachers and teaching assistants enables you to do well. We are particularly impressed by the support provided for those of you who sometimes find learning hard. You really impressed us with your knowledge of how to keep yourself safe at all times, and we were pleased to hear that you feel safe in school.

Your parents and carers are very happy with the quality of education you receive, and that you enjoy all the additional activities and educational visits the school provides. We are also impressed with the way you get involved with your local community. Equally impressive is the standard of your work at the end of Year 6, which is better than in the majority of other schools.

We know the headteacher and governors are always striving to make your school even better. We want them to make sure the quality of marking of your work is consistently good across the school. This will let you know exactly what you are doing well and inform you how you can improve your work further. We also want teachers to challenge the more able among you to accelerate your progress. We have also asked the school to plan a curriculum that will help you to see the links between the different subjects to further enhance your learning.

You can help with these improvements by continuing to work hard and do your best and informing your teachers if you think the work you get is not hard enough. We would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards

Lead Inspector

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