

St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100266
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	354827
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	David Shepherd

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Henrietta Jackson-Stopps
Headteacher	Laura Birkett
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 18 lessons led by 15 different teachers. Meetings were held with the senior staff, a group of pupils and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation and the school's analysis of its data. Questionnaires from 95 parents and carers, 36 staff and 97 pupils were received and analysed.

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

- Why boys appear not to perform as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 2 and 6, and whether this pattern is replicated in other year groups.
- Why results in mathematics in Year 6 are not as high as those in English.
- How consistent teaching and assessment are throughout the school.
- The impact on progress and attainment of the monitoring carried out by senior and middle leaders.

Information about the school

This school is larger than most primary schools, and draws its pupils from the local area. Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is well above average. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is also above average. The main needs are behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and speech, language and communication needs. Higher than average proportions of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The numbers of pupils leaving or joining the school during the year is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Nursery classes and two Reception classes. The school has gained the Healthy Schools status and a Food for Life Gold award. The school is in partnership with a federation of schools that is led by an executive principal.

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

St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. This is because of the energy, drive and vision of the head of school, ably supported by the executive principal, in improving teaching and pupils' progress. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress because teaching is satisfactory. However, school data indicate that the progress made by pupils this academic year has improved from that made in previous years. There are some good features in the school's work. In particular, good care, guidance and support mean that pupils enjoy school, feel safe, get on well together, lead healthy lifestyles, behave well and play a significant part in enabling the school to run smoothly.

Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is built on through the school and pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics. The school has succeeded in raising boys' attainment, and now the attainment of boys and girls is similar throughout the school. This is because teachers have provided good opportunities for pupils to read and write in different contexts and this has engaged boys in particular. Attainment in mathematics is similar to that in reading and writing throughout the school. This is because the teaching of mathematics has been a priority for the school and has improved during the year. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

A notable feature of lessons is the consistently good relationships between pupils and adults. As a result, pupils try hard to please staff. Teachers ask probing questions that encourage pupils to think carefully and reflect on their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good guidance to pupils in their groups, but on a few occasions, pupils working independently are left too long without support and this slows down their learning. The purpose of lessons is included in planning, but what pupils at different levels of ability are expected to learn is not. The result of this is that pupils, especially the most able, are not set work appropriate to their abilities. This is particularly evident in mathematics. Marking is encouraging but does not consistently provide enough guidance for pupils and, where next steps are indicated, pupils are not always given enough time to respond to suggestions made. This means that marking is not leading to improvement effectively enough. The quality of teaching and learning is not consistent throughout the school, and this means that pupils make inconsistent progress in a small minority of classes. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, not all key workers have sufficient expertise to carry out and use assessments on children's progress effectively enough.

Senior staff and middle leaders are new to their roles this year and, under the guidance of the head of school and executive principal, are developing the skills necessary to carry out their tasks effectively. This has a positive impact on pupil progress. Links with parents and

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carers are good. The governing body is keen and supportive. Self-evaluation is accurate and appropriate priorities for development are identified. This, along with strong and focused leadership that has galvanised the staff, the concerted and effective actions that have been taken to overcome weaknesses in teaching, the positive relationships throughout the school and the success in accelerating progress this past year, demonstrates the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, ensure more-able pupils make the progress expected of their abilities, particularly in mathematics.
- By April 2012, raise the quality of teaching and assessment so that at least 80% of lessons are judged good by improving consistency in:
 - letting pupils of different abilities know what they are expected to learn by the end of lessons
 - correcting misunderstandings during lessons, especially of pupils working independently
 - ensuring that marking indicates the next steps in learning and providing pupils with opportunities to correct their mistakes.
- By April 2012, improve the consistency in Early Years Foundation Stage provision by:
 - training key workers in assessment procedures
 - making better use of assessment in planning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Progress is satisfactory overall because pupils start school with skills and abilities that are broadly at expected levels and develop to the point where results as well as standards seen in lessons and books by inspectors are similarly broadly at expected levels. The progress made by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their work. For example, in Year 6, pupils were enthusiastically engaged in devising words and phrases to describe the four seasons. They were keen to discuss their thinking with their partners and other classmates as they tried to improve their work. However, more-able pupils did not achieve as much as they could because high enough expectations of their learning had not been planned effectively. In Year 2, pupils were eager to say their favourite drinks as they gathered data from which to compile their graphs. Pupils have a good understanding about healthy eating and the importance of exercise. They enjoy physical activities in lessons and after-school clubs that help promote further their healthy lifestyles. The impact of Healthy Schools status and the Food for Life Gold can be seen by their positive responses to this aspect in their questionnaire. Pupils feel safe in school. They behaved well in the lessons seen, and sometimes their behaviour was exemplary. However, a small minority of pupils indicated in their questionnaires that this is not always the case. Pupils make a good contribution to

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the school and local communities. For example, some act as playground buddies, peer mediators and monitors for assembly and recycling activities. Pupils have raised money for a wide range of charities at home and abroad. Elected pupils represent their peers on the school council. Pupils reflect thoughtfully upon some of the broader issues in life, such as belonging to the school and wider communities. They learn about aspects of a range of cultures, including those represented by their classmates. Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of their education.

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?

Teachers' planning and classroom organisation are effective in enabling lessons to flow smoothly and the purposes of lessons are made clear to pupils. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to discuss their work with a partner and this helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills well. They review their work, and sometimes that of their classmates as well, and this helps them to think of ways of improving what they have written. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language satisfactorily. This additional provision helps these pupils to make satisfactory progress. The content of lessons is often very interesting and this encourages pupils to work hard, although their work is sometimes untidy. The teaching of mathematics to more-able pupils is sometimes

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not sufficiently challenging and not enough of them make expected progress in Key Stage 2.

Provision to promote pupils' personal development is included effectively throughout the curriculum. Enrichment activities are varied and visits to places of interest, including residential stays, and visitors to the school are popular with pupils. The newly purchased information and communication technology resources are used effectively to support learning. Provision in science is good but there is not enough evidence of learning in geography and history.

Effective arrangements for pupils joining the school ensure that they settle quickly. In replies to their questionnaires, most pupils responded that they were looked after very well by staff. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified swiftly and suitable provision is allocated to meet their needs. The school enlists the support of all appropriate agencies and works well with parents and carers to meet pupils' special social and emotional needs, and the needs of pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. One parent wrote, 'The school is really good because they have helped me with my son's behaviour.' Procedures for promoting attendance are effective. Transition arrangements are good from the Reception classes into Year 1 and from Year 6 to secondary school.

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?

Morale is high because staff feel that their contributions are valued by the head of school and senior leaders. There is a strong sense of teamwork where staff are pulling together to achieve goals because, in a relatively short period of time, the head of school, under the guidance of the executive principal, and senior leaders have effectively instilled a sense of ambition and drive to improve further the work of the school. The school identifies accurately the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning and incorporates the areas for development into detailed plans of action. These are providing the structure for raising the quality of teaching and its impact on successfully accelerating pupils' progress.

The school has satisfactory relationships with parents and carers. As one parent and carer wrote, 'Mathstastic days are good in showing parents the mathematics systems used in school.' Initiatives, such as welcome evenings at the beginning of the school year, home-school agreements and weekly newsletters all help to promote this relationship. Parents and carers are invited into school on a number of occasions, such as for consultation evenings and school events.

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Governance is satisfactory. After an unsettled period during the past year, the governing body has had its designated powers returned by the local authority and is once again responsible for managing its budget. It is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is influential in determining its strategic direction. The governing body is ambitious for the school to do well, is supportive and shows high levels of commitment to the school. Safeguarding procedures are good. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel their children are safe in school. All the staff who responded to their questionnaire agree with parents and carers. Staff are rigorously vetted and trained regularly in child protection procedures. Links with the local authority are good. The school has joined a federation of other local schools in a three-year partnership arrangement under the guidance of an executive principal and this is contributing significantly to improved teaching and learning at the school. Links with outside agencies and the church are good and help promote effectively the personal development and well-being of pupils.

The school promotes equality for the different groups of pupils in the school and tackles any racist behaviour and discrimination effectively. It provides appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the needs of the most-able pupils are not always met sufficiently. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their local community and some international communities but their understanding of wider national communities 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	3
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 receive a satisfactory start to their schooling. They make satisfactory progress from their starting points in most areas of their learning. They make good progress in their

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personal, social and emotional development but their skills in reading, writing and calculation are not as well developed. However, they are confident speakers and listeners by the time they start in Year 1.

Children enjoy their learning and work well independently. They are looked after well and are kept safe. Children are given good opportunities to chat to adults about what they are doing. They practise the sounds letters make, read, write, count and play with toys and other equipment. Behaviour is good and children get on well with each other and adults. The learning environment is stimulating and well organised. The outdoor environment, in particular, has been improved recently and now provides good opportunities for learning across all areas of provision. The balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities is good.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and staff work well together as a team. However, high staff turnover and recent changes in the role of nursery officers, now key workers, have resulted in some staff being at an early stage of understanding fully the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observations and assessments of children are satisfactory but there are inconsistencies between different key workers. There is no obvious link between observations, assessment and planning to meet children's needs. Links with parents and carers are good. Induction procedures are good and children quickly settle into school routines.

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

The response rate from parents and carers to the questionnaire was average. Their views were largely positive. Approximately one tenth of the questionnaires returned included written comments, some of which were critical of the school. Parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school and that they are kept safe. They feel their children make good progress. One parent and carer wrote, 'My son loves the school and the teachers and he is very happy there.' A few parents and carers wrote that behaviour is not managed well enough. There were concerns also that some of their children were not making enough progress. Inspectors found that behaviour was managed well during the inspection. They also found that there were differences between classes in the quality of teaching and learning, and this is why some pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 353 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	69	26	27	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	57	60	33	35	2	2	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	61	30	32	6	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	53	35	37	9	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	55	33	35	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	54	31	33	9	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	50	39	42	6	6	1	1
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)	49	52	31	33	7	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	44	46	49	7	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	55	36	39	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	32	54	57	7	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	43	44	47	4	4	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	56	34	37	5	5	1	1

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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School, London N1 6JG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. You go to a satisfactory but rapidly improving school where adults work hard to prepare you for the future. Here are some of the best things we found.

- You enjoy school and get on really well with each other. Your attendance is good.
- You feel safe and understand the importance of eating healthy foods and taking exercise.
- You like your teachers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.
- You are well behaved and make a good contribution to the school.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do three things to make your school better.

- Make sure that those who do not find their work difficult make good progress, especially in mathematics.
- Let you know what you are expected to learn by the end of each lesson and how well you have done, and give you time to carry out improvements suggested in marking.
- Making sure that the assessments made of younger children's progress are useful and used to plan future activities.

All of you can help by continuing to work very hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd
Lead inspector

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