

St John the Evangelist CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133532
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	360527
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lyn Bostock
Headteacher	Penny Price
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2008
School address	Bluebell Way Shilton Park Carterton OX18 1JF
Telephone number	01993843124
Fax number	01993845645
Email address	office.2613@st-john.oxon.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited three assemblies and observed 12 teaching staff while visiting 22 lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, the minutes of governing body meetings, arrangements for safeguarding, and pupils' work. Pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised along with 94 completed by parents and carers.

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

- The attainment of boys at Key Stage 1 and whether they attain well enough, particularly in their reading and writing.
- The progress made by girls in mathematics throughout the school.
- The effectiveness of support provided by the school for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The pupils' awareness of people from other cultures and backgrounds.

Information about the school

St John the Evangelist is a larger-than-average primary school. Most pupils are from White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during the course of the year is higher than that seen nationally, partly because of movement of service personnel from the local RAF base.

The accommodation has been extended to take account of the significant increase in pupil numbers since the previous inspection. Further work is due to commence to improve the accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There have been a number of new appointments to the senior leadership over the past year. An after-school club, managed by the governing body, operates each school day.

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

3

Main findings

St John the Evangelist School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. They make satisfactory progress overall and their attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. At Key Stage 1, boys are making satisfactory progress in both reading and writing, helped by the introduction of the regular teaching of letter sounds. However, pupils' progress is uneven across the school, particularly in mathematics, and there are too few opportunities for them to put their mathematical skills to practical use. Pupils attain as well as they do because of consistently good teaching in Year 6, but the school recognises that they are not all achieving their potential. A focus on improving pupils' writing skills has been effective across the school, although a small number of teachers are sometimes too ready to accept work which is below the quality the pupils are capable of producing. Pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. All teachers are now planning work for different ability groups. However, they are not always using the day-to-day assessments to ensure tasks are matched sufficiently well to all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although there is evidence of good practice, often, teachers provide the pupils with too much information at the beginning of lessons, limiting the pupils' opportunities for independent learning. The curriculum is good overall and provides pupils with particular strengths in creative subjects such as art. Visits, residential trips and clubs enhance the curriculum well. The effective care, guidance and support for pupils help their good personal development. Staff provide particularly good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum. Those pupils who have difficulties with their behaviour are managed and supported well.

The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Recent leadership appointments are beginning to have an impact and the new Early Years Foundation Stage leader and other senior staff model good teaching practice. The school has a clearer picture now of pupils' progress through improved tracking procedures and is beginning to tackle more rigorously the task of improving the quality of teaching. The school has rightly acknowledged that it is not providing sufficient information to keep parents and carers fully informed about their children's progress and that the parents and carers are not always clear about behaviour and safeguarding policies. Taken together, those factors indicate the school's capacity for sustained improvement is no more than satisfactory.

About 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?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring work is sufficiently challenging and that there are more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better in all classes by:
 - sharing best practice
 - raising expectations and ensuring that learning tasks are challenging for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that lesson introductions are not too long and that pupils are given sufficient time to complete tasks
 - not overloading pupils with information and allowing them to develop their independent learning skills
 - allowing more-able pupils to move on to more challenging work sooner.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy lessons and most have good attendance records. However, attendance is no more than broadly average overall because of holidays taken during term time by a small number of parents and carers. The skills and abilities of most children when they enter the Nursery are below average. The children make satisfactory progress in that class, good progress in the Reception classes, and achieve well in the later years of Key Stage 2. For example, in a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were enthused by an investigation they were undertaking to identify patterns of probability; their written work showed that most were progressing well because they were being challenged. Pupils' recognition of letter sounds is improving and this is contributing to their generally good progress in reading. School assessment information and inspection evidence show that there are no significant differences between the work of girls and boys, including in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with their classmates.

Pupils feel safe in school and they say they know who to turn to should they have any concerns. They know how to stay safe both in school and in the community. Safer-cycling courses held at school help them to develop a good awareness of road traffic hazards. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. The healthy school council has had a positive impact on reviewing lunches and pupils enjoy the healthy 'smoothies' particularly. A good and increasing number of pupils enjoy the wide range of sporting and physical activities on offer. The school council provides a forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute to school life in other ways, for example through membership of the eco council and running the fruit bar each morning. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and demonstrate good care for others through their fundraising activities. Their good social development, satisfactory basic skills and average attendance mean that pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of education.

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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	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?

Good relationships between teachers and pupils are evident in most lessons and these help to create a calm and supportive learning environment. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because assessment information is used well to pitch the work at the correct level, to challenge pupils' thinking and to encourage them to work independently. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson preparing them for a visit to the Dinosaur Museum, pupils were encouraged to develop their speaking skills by explaining their thoughts on the large bones they had discovered in the school grounds. In the best lessons, teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' progress in the lesson, rather than withdrawing them for individual activities. However, such good practices are not shared widely enough. Where lessons are less effective, teachers spend too long explaining tasks and do not provide sufficient challenge soon enough, particularly for more-able pupils. In some classes, there is an overuse of worksheets that do little to challenge the pupils' thinking.

The curriculum is broad and varied and contributes well to pupils' social development and well-being. Pupils are provided with increasing opportunities to develop their information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy skills through different subjects, although the school recognises that this should be developed further. The curriculum is planned well to promote pupils' healthy lifestyles through drugs and sex education and through physical education. Visits to the schools' own Forest School site in the local Country Park and residential trips to Cornbury Park provide the pupils with good

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opportunities for learning about the environment. Pupils benefit also from links with a local secondary school, which support gifted and talented pupils; plans to develop links with other schools to raise pupils' awareness of people from more diverse backgrounds are at an early stage.

The school provides significant help for the children of potentially more-vulnerable families and all staff are kept well informed about the children's particular needs. Case studies point to some well-developed partnerships with a range of educational, medical and social support agencies that have helped families overcome barriers to their children's learning. Pupils new to the school are supported well, enabling them to settle well. Pupils' well-being is monitored carefully and well-judged support provided where necessary. The successful 'Beach Club' provides a safe and stimulating environment for pupils after 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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are clear about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. New roles and responsibilities have been assigned. For example, a senior teacher has been appointed to oversee improvements in teaching and there is evidence of improvement in some year groups. While teaching and learning are monitored systematically, the outcomes are not yet acted upon sufficiently rigorously to improve their quality in all lessons. However, the school is open about what it needs to do to improve and seeks outside support where necessary, for example to help develop the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The governing body is kept well informed about trends in outcomes for pupils and adequately holds senior leaders to account. It recognises that it should monitor the implementation of the community cohesion plan more rigorously to determine its impact on pupils' awareness of people from other cultures and backgrounds, such as those linked to St John's through a school in Abu Dhabi.

At the time of the inspection, arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils were good and there are effective procedures in place to ensure people working with pupils are vetted properly. Responsibilities are clear, so that the school provides a safe environment for all. The procedures meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. For example, it has successfully reduced the difference in progress between boys and girls and improved that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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

The recent appointment of the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator is having a positive impact upon the provision. Self-evaluation is systematic and rigorous and good tracking and assessments are now providing the school with an accurate picture of how well children are progressing. However, there is still work to do to ensure the quality of the learning in the Nursery matches that taking place in the Reception classes.

Assessment information is generally used well to plan a wide range of interesting activities for the children. However, while children in the Reception classes are provided with good opportunities to find things out for themselves, children in the Nursery class are too directed and this does not promote their personal development sufficiently well. Because children make good progress in the Reception classes, their attainment on entry to Year 1 is broadly average.

The large outside area is used well. For example, during the inspection children, thoroughly, enjoyed making a large island in the sand area, working well with one another. The teacher worked effectively, questioning them and encouraging improvements in their language. The regular teaching of letter sounds is providing the children with a good foundation for reading and writing, while their individual learning journeys provide staff and parents with a clear picture of how well they are progressing. Parents and carers value the opportunity to contribute to the journal and the regular and informative assessments made by staff.

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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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Fewer questionnaires were returned than average. Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire said that their children are happy in school and that they are kept safe and helped to follow a healthy lifestyle. They said that, overall, they are happy with their children's experience at the school. However, a small minority expressed concerns regarding behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour was good overall and that the school has appropriate arrangements in place to deal with any that is unsatisfactory. A similar proportion said that they were not happy with how the school takes account of their concerns and suggestions. The school acknowledges that it needs to be more effective in communicating with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John the Evangelist C of E 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 381 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	47	48	51	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	50	45	48	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	27	60	64	5	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	22	61	65	10	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	34	58	62	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	27	54	57	10	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	31	62	66	3	3	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)	28	30	59	63	1	1	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	24	61	65	10	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	18	43	46	23	24	9	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	16	53	56	20	21	6	6
The school is led and managed effectively	20	21	47	50	16	17	8	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	27	63	67	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).

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.



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Evangelist C of E Primary School, Carterton OX18 1JF

Thank you very much for welcoming us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. We liked hearing about the Forest School and about your end-of-term concert that you are looking forward to. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school and what we have asked the school to do to become even better.

- Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.
- You are provided with a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- You say you enjoy school and we saw that in your enthusiasm and in your good behaviour. Your attendance is satisfactory.
- You have a good understanding of what you need to do to keep healthy and fit.
- Your learning is made more interesting by the good curriculum and many clubs, activities, visits and visitors.
- You are looked after well by the teachers and other staff and they give those of you who find learning difficult considerable help and support.

Those in charge of the school provide good leadership and know what they need to do to make it even better. We have asked your headteacher and staff to do the following.

- Help all of you to do even better in mathematics.
- Make sure there is more good teaching, so that you are able to learn more quickly.
- Make sure your parents and carers know all about your work in school.

All of you can all help by trying really hard with mathematics and by telling your teachers if the work is too easy.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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