

St John's Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120920
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	363928
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Duncan Ramsey

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Nicholls
Headteacher	Rebecca Quinn
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eight teachers were observed in ten sessions. Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior staff, three members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers, observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books and displays and visited Year 6 on their residential experience. They scrutinised documentation including: the school development plan; the school's self-evaluation report; assessments; records of pupils' progress; teachers' planning; and safeguarding and welfare arrangements. Inspectors analysed 75 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- How effective have leaders' actions been in halting the downward trend in attainment over the past three years, particularly in mathematics?
- What are the roles of subject leaders and how effective are they in leading their subjects?
- How robust is the school's use of assessment data to tackle underachievement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school situated on a large site. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average as is the proportion learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average and the overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has earned a range of awards including the National Healthy Schools award and the Primary Quality Mark. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2011 and there have been many changes in the membership of the governing body since the last inspection.

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's is a satisfactory school. It is improving steadily after a period of falling standards during the last three years. The school's provision of care, guidance and support is outstanding, as are the partnerships in promoting learning and well-being. The new headteacher has successfully introduced a range of initiatives that have brought about an improvement in attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2011, particularly in mathematics. The school community is committed to raising attainment further through the development of assessment systems and a focus on the quality of teaching and learning. School self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development well. Appropriate actions to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are set out in the school development plan. However, monitoring systems are not rigorous enough to ensure that challenging targets for pupils are set and met. As a result, the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

Teaching is satisfactory. The recent focus on improving the quality of teaching is beginning to have an impact on pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics. This, along with a good curriculum that has been designed to develop links across subjects and motivate pupils through extensive opportunities in the well-developed school grounds, means that attainment is rising. Achievement is satisfactory and the attainment of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics at the end of Year 6 has greatly improved and is now above the national average. Assessment is not fully used by teachers to plan activities so that all pupils can always progress well. This means that the progress of pupils is inconsistent between classes, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where assessment is used very effectively, work is set at just the right level but there are too many instances where the level of challenge for all groups of pupils is not sufficiently high. This is because not enough thought is given to the pupils' starting points. The quality of feedback given to pupils in lessons and through marking varies too, so that not all pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Behaviour is good. Pupils show thought and concern for one another and willingly take on responsibilities relating to the school and the wider community. They make an outstanding contribution to the community through a range of important local community projects and a high level of charity work. They show a good knowledge of how to keep safe because of the good range of learning opportunities provided by the school in this area. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and talk confidently of the importance of exercise and what makes a healthy meal. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. This is because the very positive school ethos and the broad and balanced curriculum encourage pupils' development in these areas. All adults show very high levels of concern for the safety and well-being of pupils and their families. Particularly high quality support is provided for those pupils who may be vulnerable. A good partnership

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exists between a large majority of parents and carers who are pleased with what the school has to offer their children. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses but have yet to develop their partnership with senior leaders in order to ensure that they have higher expectations of pupils' progress.

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?

- Raise attainment by using assessment data to set pupils challenging but achievable targets and ensure that their progress towards these is rigorously monitored.
- Increase the rate at which pupils make progress in their learning by: -
 - ensuring that all class teachers set more challenging activities for pupils in line with their abilities
 - ensuring that marking provides pupils with clear guidance as to how they can improve their work
 - improving the rigour with which teaching and learning is monitored and share good and outstanding practice with all staff.
- Establish clear assessment procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that teachers and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress children are making, together with their levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

By the end of Year 2, attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been a consistent pattern for several years. Attainment by the end of Year 6 shows a declining trend over the last three years. During this period, attainment in English has fallen from being significantly above average to average. Attainment in mathematics has also declined but less significantly. In the most recent tests, the results for mathematics have improved with a significant increase in pupils attaining the higher levels. The introduction of termly pupil progress meetings means that the school is becoming aware of any underachievement or slow progress more quickly. Feedback from lesson observations indicates that pupils are becoming more actively involved in the learning process. However, targets for pupils' progress are not sufficiently challenging and action plans that are implemented to support pupils are not monitored rigorously enough to ensure that pupils' progress has accelerated as a result of interventions. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Arrangements to help pupils who enter the school later in the year are effective as these pupils settle in well and make satisfactory progress.

Pupils have well-developed social skills which contribute to cooperative learning and good behaviour. In a mathematics class for older pupils, their good independent working skills enabled them to concentrate hard on a well-planned activity so that they could support one another's learning. However, pupils do not always understand their next steps in their learning because the quality of feedback is inconsistent.

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Pupils speak confidently about a range of religions as a result of activities in class and school assemblies. Pupils of all ages are very keen to initiate community projects. They play an active role in the local community, show sincere concern for those less well off than themselves and enthusiastically raise money for charity. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils' personal skills are well developed and the satisfactory progress they make in English and mathematics means that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in 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	1
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?

Teachers care for their pupils and the pupils say that they enjoy their learning. Where teaching is good or better, the lesson objectives are clear, learning is matched to pupils' ability levels and there are high expectations of pupils' progress. In other lessons, teachers' planning and classroom delivery do not enable all groups of pupils to make good progress. The quality of marking is inconsistent. In the better examples, it is very thorough with clear feedback and ideas given to support pupils' next stage in learning. In others, there is not enough guidance for pupils to move their learning forward. New assessment systems have been introduced and these are beginning to help increase the pace of progress.

The curriculum has recently been developed to increase the links between subjects and make learning more relevant to pupils. The outdoor curriculum is particularly good as

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many lessons take place in the school grounds and further afield. Good use is made of the local community to support the curriculum. For example, Year 6 project work is linked to boat building. Pupils design and build boats after visiting a local boatyard. They then race them to evaluate the success of their design and construction and use this information to make improvements. This project supported the development of good skills in literacy, mathematics, speaking and listening and team work. A wide and well-supported range of extra-curricular activities are provided to enrich the curriculum, particularly in sports and music clubs. The residential experience provided for Year 6 children is good. It is linked effectively to the curriculum so that pupils are engaged in learning activities throughout the week with a particular emphasis on science and the environment.

Pupils' pastoral needs are met to a very high level. The pupils say that they feel looked after and valued in a secure and safe environment. Pupils settle into school well and are happy with their school life. The school has an inclusive ethos which is demonstrated by the outstanding care for those who may be vulnerable and the support provided to families. The school has outstanding links with a range of external agencies that are used effectively to support a wide range of pupils' needs. Transition arrangements between year groups and when pupils leave to go to secondary school are well managed.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is managed effectively by the headteacher who has made several positive and decisive changes that are having an impact on attainment across the school. She is supported by a dedicated deputy who models much excellent practice within the classroom. Middle leaders are not yet taking enough responsibility for the progress and attainment of pupils in order to continue the drive to raise standards. Subject leaders do not analyse pupils' progress in detail and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is not challenging enough. There has been significant change within the governing body during the last two years and new systems set up to develop the role of governors. The governing body understands the school's strengths and areas for development and are increasingly holding the school to account. There are good links between named governors and those with specific school responsibilities. The school provides satisfactory value for money and funds are used wisely to deploy staff and improve the school environment.

Equality of opportunity is satisfactorily promoted through analysis of data and all groups of pupils make similar progress. Safeguarding procedures are good. The development of pupils' awareness about keeping safe is strong and they talk confidently about how to

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avoid a variety of dangers. Community cohesion is well promoted through a caring school ethos where all pupils are respected and valued. There are good links with a school in India which support the development of pupils' global awareness but the pupils have more limited opportunities to develop their first-hand understanding of Britain as a multicultural society. The effectiveness of the school's partnerships in promoting pupils' learning and well-being is outstanding. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies support work with specific groups and individuals. The developing partnerships with parents and carers in providing support to the curriculum and to learning have been a contributing factor to the recent improvement in results. Parents and carers feel welcome to visit the school and be a partner in their child's learning.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery class. They make good progress and achieve well so that by the end of the year they have many skills that are above those expected nationally. Much of the practice in the Nursery is good and some is outstanding. Children settle quickly because of effective induction arrangements. They learn and play in attractive accommodation that is well managed. Children demonstrate good levels of independence and develop good social and emotional attributes. There is a good range of activities that are carefully prepared to meet their needs and interests. The outdoor environment is used very well to support all aspects of learning and children develop good levels of confidence and how to keep themselves safe. The pace of learning slows in the Reception class because assessment and records of progress are not used effectively to plan the next steps in pupil's learning. New systems put in place by the headteacher have not yet been implemented and this leads to inconsistencies in practice between the Nursery and Reception classes.

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Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory as children make satisfactory progress in a safe secure environment. The Nursery and Reception classes do not work closely enough together to ensure that planning, teaching and the use of assessment is consistent so that rates of progress can be maintained. In both classes, children enjoy opportunities to explore, investigate and increase their understanding of the world around them. Their behaviour is good and they learn about living a healthy lifestyle in a number of practical ways. Welfare arrangements are good and good systems for ensuring children's health and safety. The satisfactory provision means that few children fall behind the level that is expected, but that some children do not make the good progress of which they are capable. Good links with parents and carers in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that partnerships between the school and home are good.

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

Over one third of the parents and carers completed the questionnaire, which is above average for a primary school. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school and felt that the school keeps their children safe. Several parents and carers commented on the positive changes made by the new headteacher. In response to the comments of a small proportion of parents, inspectors investigated the quality of pupil behaviour and how concerns are managed. The behaviour of pupils was monitored throughout the inspection and judged to be good both within the class and at playtime. The headteacher provided good evidence to show that she gives a high priority to parental concerns and responds accordingly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's Community Primary School and Nursery 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	68	23	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	64	24	32	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	48	35	47	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	52	31	41	1	1	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	42	56	32	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	44	36	48	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	48	38	51	0	0	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)	46	61	28	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	44	37	49	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	43	34	45	6	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	43	34	45	7	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	52	31	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	55	32	43	1	1	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.



6 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's Community Primary School and Nursery, Norwich, NR12 8NX

Thank you so much for your warm welcome to St John's school and for helping us with the recent inspection. We enjoyed our visit and were really impressed with your good behaviour and the way you care for the school environment. Everyone was polite and considerate and you were able to talk confidently about school life. Your good behaviour and positive attitudes will help you as you grow up.

There are lots of other good things about school.

Your headteacher is kind, caring and has introduced changes that are helping you learn faster and reach higher standards.

You make an excellent contribution to the local community in a range of ways such as when you sing at the retirement home and when you raise money for charity.

You all try hard and make satisfactory progress in your work.

The school provides outstanding care for you and keeps you safe.

Your school has outstanding partnerships with others which help to support all pupils in school equally well.

We have asked the governing body, headteacher and staff to look at how they can make things better.

Ensure that all teachers have high expectations of what you can achieve and that they keep a close eye on how you are doing so that they can help you make good progress.

Make sure that the work they give you is challenging and that the comments they make when marking your work help you with your next steps in learning.

You can help bring about improvements by working hard and attending school as regularly as possible. Importantly, when you are now clear about what you need to do next, do make sure you always ask your teachers to help you.

Yours sincerely

Duncan Ramsey

Lead Inspector

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