

St John's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115618
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379108
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Gillespie
Headteacher	Jan Wagstaff
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 19 lessons or part lessons and observed 8 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. They observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, policies and procedures, particularly those concerning safeguarding. Inspectors looked at the data showing the progress that pupils are making and evidence from the school's own monitoring as well as that of the School Improvement Partner. Questionnaires returned by 57 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by 13 staff and 82 pupils in Years 3 to 6.

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

- Whether pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making sufficient progress.
- Whether pupils who have been identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making sufficient progress.
- Any differences in the achievement of boys and girls across the school.

Information about the school

St John's is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has fallen in the last couple of years and is now broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these have moderate learning, speech and language or behavioural difficulties. A very large majority of the pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. The school runs a before- and after-school club. There is a children's centre on site, which is managed independently and inspected separately.

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

This is a good school, where there have been significant improvements since the last inspection. For instance, the quality of care, guidance and support is now outstanding and this results in pupils feeling extremely safe and secure in school. Pupils were entirely confident that any problems they might have would be listened to and dealt with effectively. This care also extends to families through the appointment of a family support worker. Her work, and the determination of the school to be a listening ear, are reflected in the views of parents and carers who say such things as, 'Should we have a problem the school will be happy to deal with it.' An important provision, which was started in response to parental needs, is the successful before- and after-school club.

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being are also now outstanding. Links with other schools and organisations are extensive and wide ranging and benefit pupils considerably. For example, the strong links with a local secondary school have enabled the school to devise several innovations to the curriculum, such as outstanding cross-curricular features. Partnerships also play a key role in the excellent contribution that pupils make to the school and wider community. Pupils' involvement in the local and wider community, such as attending the Armistice Day event in the town, is substantial and highly valued. This also contributes to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are developing extremely well into thoughtful and considerate young people, who are acutely aware of their role in the local and wider communities and their consequent responsibilities.

Pupils are making good progress during their time in the school and they leave with broadly average attainment. Despite the performance of pupils in Year 2 being low in 2010, this has improved and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making good progress. Although there were differences between the performance of boys and girls noted in the results at both key stages in 2010, the gap is narrowing. There have been improvements in pupils' progress in recent years. For instance, the provisional results for Year 6 in 2011 show that all those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities made particularly good progress from Key Stage 1. There is also an improvement in pupils' attainment in mathematics, although too many pupils are still unable to speedily recall basic number facts.

Pupils' good progress is due to consistently good teaching. There are effective systems in place to assess how well pupils are doing, and these are used well to

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identify any potential underachievement and put in place strategies to address this. However, these systems are not being used to then set clear targets for pupils' future learning, so the targets currently set are not sufficiently specific to the learning needs of each pupil. This is slowing pupils' potentially faster progress.

There is a very clear shared ambition for improvement. On their questionnaire, all staff who responded strongly agreed that they know what the school is trying to achieve and all said that they are involved in the school's systems of self-evaluation. Governors are also involved in self-evaluation, partly through their recent work with all subject leaders within the school. This corporate endeavour has built an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development and clear plans to address the latter. Bearing this in mind, alongside the progress that has been made since the last inspection, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that all groups of pupils have clear and ambitious targets in all lessons
 - developing the programme to improve pupils' basic skills in mathematics.
- Increase pupils' understanding of how they can improve, and accelerate their progress further in English and mathematics, by setting precise targets for pupils' next steps in learning that accurately match each one's abilities and needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the school with generally low levels of skills and knowledge, particularly in their communication, language and literacy. They therefore make good progress to leave with average attainment. This is the case for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although girls are not doing as well as boys in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, the school has recognised this and has put in place strategies to remedy it. This is being successful and the gap is closing. Similarly, in Years 1 and 2, the school has developed the curriculum so that it is more engaging for boys and this is resulting in their faster progress.

Learning in lessons is typified by enthusiasm, enjoyment and engagement. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because of the interesting and varied activities planned for them. For instance, pupils in Year 2 were working at a range of tasks, appropriate to their abilities, where they were using dice to create numbers to add together. This activity and the range of possibilities enthused the pupils and there was an excited buzz of earnest endeavour. Similarly in Year 6, pupils were actively engaged and motivated in an English lesson, where their work was based on their current project on India. An excellent DVD of work done in Year 3, where the pupils planned and acted scenarios as an accompaniment to a song, is a good example of how the excellent

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partnerships inspire the pupils. They worked with a local organisation that makes videos and their enjoyment and expertise was very evident.

Pupils' personal development is one of the strengths of the school and the pupils are very willing to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities to take on responsibilities. They behave well, often showing considerable sensitivity to those around them, particularly those with significant problems. Their spiritual development is enhanced by the very close links, not only with the local Anglican church, but also with teams from churches of other denominations. They also have a good awareness of other faiths and cultures. Pupils' attendance has improved recently and is now average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are well organised and create a calm and orderly learning environment. A particular strength is their planning for the involvement of teaching assistants. Teaching assistants' skills have been developed well and the assistants support learning skilfully for groups and individuals. This is particularly noted in their work with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but is also evident in their work with the more able and gifted and talented pupils. Although teachers often share success criteria for learning with pupils, these are not always suitably matched to the range of abilities of the pupils or sufficiently ambitious.

¹ 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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Pupils' levels of understanding and knowledge are assessed regularly, but this information is not used well to set targets for future learning. Targets set are not sufficiently specific and are therefore not used effectively in planning lessons or when marking pupils' work. In addition, targets are not consistently shared with pupils and their parents and carers, and pupils are not always given enough time to respond to teachers' feedback. The school has started to use a framework for this assessment, but it is not yet sufficiently embedded to impact on pupils' progress significantly.

The curriculum is varied, often innovative, and engaging for pupils. It is enhanced significantly by a number of enrichments, which include a good range of visits and visitors. There is also a good mix of after-school activities, of which the sporting and musical ones are very popular with pupils. There are good links between subjects, providing, for example, opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. However, these opportunities are not always planned to extend pupils' skills in these areas and do not, therefore, always have a major impact in improving pupils' progress. There are also limited opportunities to use information and communication technology in other subjects.

Every child and their circumstances are extremely well known to all adults and the consequent care, guidance and support offered are exemplary. External agencies are called in whenever there is a need to support an individual. This has even happened when pupils requested it; for instance a group asked for help with anger management and expertise was called in to help them. The school is an extremely safe and secure environment for the pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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?

There is a clear ambition, shared by all staff and governors, to continue the process of improvement. This ambition emanates from the headteacher and has been extremely well communicated so that all share her determination and drive. The governing body has restructured its committees and is becoming more effective, although its members are not fully involved in formally seeking the views of stakeholders. Their membership of subject groups within the school gives them an increased understanding of standards and what needs to be done to improve.

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This is an extremely inclusive school that is demonstrating commitment to eliminating gaps between the performance of different groups of pupils. Any identified incidences of discrimination are tackled and dealt with effectively. Safeguarding procedures are secure and all policies are fully in place. Training is regular and ensures that all staff are very well aware of their responsibilities. There is a safeguarding governor, who is well informed, and safeguarding has a regular place on governors' meeting agendas.

Leaders and managers promote community cohesion well. They have a good knowledge of their local context and there are a number of initiatives to promote knowledge of the wider world, for example through links in India and the United States of America.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although they make good progress in the Reception class, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, children's attainment is still below average by the time they start in Year 1. Children make good progress in counting and number work, although this is sometimes limited by restricted resources available. Adults are good at asking focused questions to develop children's speaking and listening skills.

The particular needs of these young children are identified early and this enables strategies to be put in place, involving outside agencies when necessary, to aid them. There are excellent relationships between all adults and children and this leads to outstanding care and support.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has clear plans for further improvements, which include developing systems of assessment and using the outside area more effectively for learning across all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. A very good welcome pack, much appreciated by parents and carers, helps them to prepare their children to start happily. There is a stimulating environment in the classroom, which motivates and engages the children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The response of parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires was overwhelmingly positive and they are particularly pleased with how safe their children are kept in school. They are also very positive about how their children enjoy school, the quality of teaching, how their children are prepared for their future and how effectively the school meets the particular needs of their child. Several included comments such as, 'My child is able to learn and develop at a suitable rate with good, supportive and encouraging staff,' and, 'There are fantastic extra-curricular events for my child.'

No significant concerns were raised, although a very few expressed some concerns over the way that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Pupils spoken to during the inspection, both formally and informally, held a different view, saying that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with well and agreed with the inspection judgement that behaviour is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's CE 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	61	21	37	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	67	19	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	40	32	56	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	40	31	54	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	47	28	49	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	46	28	49	1	2	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	40	32	56	1	2	1	2
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)	25	44	29	51	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	44	31	54	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	33	27	47	7	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	39	27	47	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	46	29	51	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	51	27	47	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



22 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's CE Primary School, Coleford GL16 8DU

Thank you so much for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking to you and hearing how much you enjoy school and the interesting things planned for you. We are not surprised that you told us that you are very proud of your school as it is a good school.

These are some of the best things we found about your school.

- All adults look after you outstandingly well.
- You feel extremely safe in school and told us that there is always someone you can go to if you have a problem.
- You make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school and are very well involved in the local and wider community as well.
- You are developing extremely well into responsible and sensible young people.
- The school has worked hard to establish links with other schools and organisations to provide you with opportunities that you wouldn't otherwise have, such as music and the DVD that Year 3 produced last year.
- You are making good progress because you are being taught well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have good plans to make your school even better.

There are two things we have suggested that can be improved.

- The standards of your writing and mathematics could improve further. The success criteria set in lessons are not always accurately matched to what you need to learn. You also need to practise your number skills more.
- The targets set for you to know how to improve your work could be better matched to your particular abilities.

We know you will help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie
Lead inspector

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