

# St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101921
<b>Local Authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	376643
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Worgan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	476
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Thomas Dunne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Scannell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Sarsfield Road Perivale Greenford UB6 7AF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8799 0970
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8998 6618
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-johnfisher.ealing.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 October 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	376643

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 18 lessons taught by 12 staff. Inspectors spoke with pupils, parents and carers, staff and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning and monitoring information, a range of policy documents and records, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a range of pupils' work. They also analysed 135 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 42 from pupils and 20 from staff.

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

- How well the school supports pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How accurate leaders and managers are in their evaluation of teaching and learning.
- How effective the initiatives in improving teaching and learning have been in raising attainment.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in preparing pupils for the later stages of their education.

## Information about the school

St John Fisher is a large Catholic primary school with a nursery. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than in most schools. In recent years there has been a steady and increasing number of pupils who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language. The on-site breakfast and after-school clubs are not managed by the governors and were not inspected as part of this 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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

St John Fisher is an outstanding school. Pupils enjoy school, have very positive attitudes, engage keenly in their learning and achieve well. The headteacher's strong leadership is a significant factor in the success of the school, which is appreciated by pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors. As one parent summed it up, 'The school has a fantastic approach to the children, they are happy to be here, keen to learn and well-behaved.' The school is particularly effective in catering for the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, raising their attainment above that of similar groups nationally. Pupils attain well and no significant group is underachieving. Progress is maintained throughout the key stages and pupils leave the school as well-rounded, confident young people with good basic skills.

The bright, stimulating, well-resourced environment in the Nursery and Reception area gives children a very positive first experience of school. Strong relationships at all levels throughout the school contribute well to pupils' outstanding feelings of safety. One pupil commented, 'If you are having personal problems, the teachers always help you.' A particular strength is pupils' confident speaking and listening, which was particularly notable in an assembly during the inspection where pupils spoke, read and sang impressively.

Teaching across the school is good and sometimes outstanding, resulting in pupils' good progress. Newly-qualified teachers are well supported and demonstrated innovative and imaginative teaching during the inspection. Children get off to an impressive start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and settle quickly, making good progress because of good teaching. Pupils do well in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Standards are above average and have been so for the last three years. Overall attainment, however, dipped slightly in 2011 because fewer pupils achieved the higher level in national tests. The school is aware of this issue and managers have successfully introduced targeted support for the more able with the aim of developing skills even further. Fundamental to pupils' good progress is the teachers' effective use of regular assessments to set imaginative and stimulating work that is well matched to pupils' needs. Marking is less consistently strong, and teachers do not always provide pupils with the guidance which they need to reach the next level. This is particularly so in relation to more-able pupils. The curriculum is particularly successful in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils at the early stages of learning English. Tasks are adapted so that these pupils make good progress.

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The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and challenging. The headteacher has developed an evaluation format which is clear and focused and is well understood by staff and governors. Managers share the headteacher's vision and all staff share an ethos of school improvement. Planning is thorough and the quality of teaching is enhanced by mutual support through lesson observation, joint planning and work scrutiny. Governance is highly effective. Challenging yet supportive, the governing body has made a significant contribution to the success of the school.

The school has outstanding capacity to sustain improvement because of its very strong leadership, ethos of challenge and improvement, and highly accurate self-evaluation. Leadership roles are distributed very effectively and staff at all levels are given the opportunity to develop further.

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

- Build on the existing high levels of challenge for pupils' learning, pursuing the school's focus on the more able by:
  - using marking and assessment even more effectively to set aspirational targets
  - giving pupils even clearer guidance on the next steps they need to take in order to reach their full potential.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Children start school with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. A group of Year 3 children exemplified the positive attitudes, high levels of enjoyment and engagement, as they eagerly joined in an activity in which they each represented part of a sentence or a punctuation mark. In a Year 4 science lesson, pupils enjoyed planning their own investigation on the solubility of solids and then went on to carry out the experiments, working cooperatively and safely in groups. Adults' careful questioning deepened pupils' understanding. The support of teaching assistants is particularly effective and they are valued and supported by management. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not always reliant on additional support and have regular opportunities to work independently.

Pupils have an excellent perspective on what constitutes unsafe situations and say they feel safe at school at all times. Their behaviour is outstanding; they respect each other and adults, and support each other's learning. They work well in groups or pairs. Pupils willingly assume varied roles and responsibilities and carry out their duties proudly and reliably. Participation in local events and fund-raising activities broaden pupils' sense of community beyond the school. Highly respectful of others' needs, pupils are reflective about the world around them. They engage enthusiastically in cultural and multicultural opportunities, also participating in activities in the wider Catholic community such as a regional Bible Quiz which the school won. Pupils have a very strong understanding of factors affecting their health

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and respond well to the school's health promotion strategies, including extra-curricular sports activities. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and the curriculum affords a number of opportunities for pupils to gain understanding of factors which affect their own, and others' health. Transition arrangements are well planned and thorough and pupils leave with the skills and confidence to allow them to progress smoothly to the next stage of their education. A strong commitment to inclusion, enhanced by excellent links with other professionals and agencies, effectively supports pupils whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable, significantly improving their well-being. Although above average, overall absence figures are depressed by the number of pupils taking days off and holidays during term time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good, with many examples of outstanding practice. In the best lessons seen which were typical of the overall profile, pace was brisk, pupils were well challenged by a variety of stimulating activities and were actively involved in learning. In a successful mathematics lesson, the teacher quickly assessed pupils' prior knowledge about types of averages, developing their understanding through a variety of tasks including a song and a data analysis task related to a penalty shoot-out. Thorough planning showed strong evidence of responding to pupils' needs, although in some lessons seen the more able were not always challenged. Teachers adapted lessons to make them relevant to the real world; a lesson on analogue and digital time was enlivened by a display of real-time arrivals at Heathrow. Although

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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verbal feedback to pupils was helpful and immediate, marking was inconsistent. The best practice was exemplified by adding a challenge, in the form of a specific task, helping pupils to take the next step up. Targets are rigorous and effective, challenging pupils to do their best. More-able pupils do well and in its continuous drive for even higher standards the school is providing even more challenge for more-able pupils at the heart of its development planning.

The curriculum is delivered very effectively through a discrete timetable, underpinned by cross-curricular projects. A particular strength is the way in which the curriculum is adapted to the needs of individual pupils. Good links between subjects contribute well to this and there are well-planned opportunities for pupils to use numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology skills in all curriculum areas. Pupils speak highly of the quality of teaching and learning offered by the school and the curriculum clearly extends beyond the classroom, allowing pupils to develop strong social, artistic and physical skills. Effective partnerships with local secondary schools extend learning opportunities in religious education, technology, physical education and art, as does a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are very well attended, necessitating a rota for some more popular clubs.

Very effective systems underpin the positive and caring ethos of the school, and pupils speak warmly about adults and how they help them. Routines are followed and pupils understand clearly what is expected of them. They act responsibly, showing care and concern for each other. Adults use information well to plan work for pupils which is imaginative and stimulating, involving them in active and independent learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school is led very effectively and efficiently by the headteacher, supported by a strong senior team and an enthusiastic staff. The headteacher's leadership is widely respected, as very strong responses in parents' and carers' and staff questionnaires confirm. A strong well-organised governing body with a wide range of skills provides leaders with an excellent balance of support and challenge. Thorough interrogation of information provided by the school, together with sharply focused monitoring visits, gives governors a detailed understanding of the school's performance. The governing body has a strong presence, gathering parents' and carers' views through questionnaires, a parent group and attendance at parents' evenings. It uses these

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views in its decision-making. It plays an active part in the school’s self-evaluation, balancing challenge and support. The headteacher provides succinct and focused self-evaluation data, which are much appreciated by governors. There is effective distribution of responsibility to leaders at different levels. Staff who have recently taken on acting roles have responded well and middle management remains strong. Support for subject teaching is strong and there is a clear emphasis on cooperative planning, which has improved teaching.

The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind and racist incidents are extremely rare. The school has equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. Very good tracking ensures that gaps in performance between different groups are minimal. Staff have a very clear understanding of the school’s comprehensive and effective policies to safeguard and protect pupils. There are well-established and thorough systems to protect pupils, and staff. All governors regularly receive good quality safeguarding training relevant to their role. Parents and carers and pupils report that the school is a safe, secure environment. Systems are evaluated and updated regularly and pupils have a thorough understanding of the dangers and benefits of internet use. Pupils have been involved in improving the safety of the school environment. For example, the school council suggested and planned the resiting of playground equipment. Relationships with parents and carers are highly positive and the school is a strongly cohesive community. The school’s reports to parents and carers are extremely thorough, commenting on pupils’ social and cultural development as well as their progress and attainment. A clear analysis and understanding of the school’s context and contribution to community cohesion has ensured pupils have opportunities to engage with those from other communities. Links with schools in Poland and Spain and with another school in the United Kingdom have been established.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Strong relationships and the well-organised, stimulating and welcoming environment contribute well to children's enthusiastic engagement across the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although some children enter with low levels of communication skills, they make good progress and are above the national average in all areas of learning when they move on to the next stage of their education. This progress is particularly significant for children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good teaching and strong support from teaching assistants, two of whom are Polish speaking, have considerable impact on these children's personal development and progress. The children enjoy active learning and this was particularly apparent in a game of 'sound bingo'. A guided reading group was well led and the children were clearly excited about learning to read. Children use computers confidently and were able to use a program developing understanding of initial letter sounds.

Provision is good. Children take time to settle and the range of activities is expanded as they become more familiar with routines and the learning environment. There is a good balance of children making purposeful choices and adult direction. Relationships between children and adults are good and parents and carers are involved in their children's learning. Parents and carers spoke highly of the induction process and of the way in which they were welcomed to the school. Parents and carers of children who speak English as an additional language were particularly complimentary about the help which their children were receiving.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and the phase leader has an excellent grasp of tracking data. Rigorous assessment procedures ensure children's needs and interests are met well. Adults make good use of a range of opportunities to observe children's developing capabilities to plan their next steps in learning. As a result of careful planning, children make good progress from their starting points.

Although the indoor environment is pleasant and stimulating, more use could be made of the spacious outdoor area provided, allowing children to take more initiative and to work independently more frequently.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

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## **Views of parents and carers**

The response to the Ofsted questionnaire was about average. Parents and carers speak extremely highly of the school and of the experience which it is affording their children. As one parent stated, it is, 'a very caring and nurturing school'. Any questions or problems are dealt with sensitively and professionally. This was seen clearly during the inspection, when, at the end of the day, parents and carers met teachers informally outside classrooms to discuss any issues and to provide advice. The questionnaire response was overwhelmingly positive, with very few, and no consensus of, negative comments.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John Fisher Catholic 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 135 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection which is an average response rate for this type of school. In total, there are 476 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	65	45	33	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	91	67	44	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	70	52	64	47	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	45	71	53	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	76	56	58	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	82	61	50	37	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	59	53	39	2	1	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)	59	44	69	51	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	58	43	67	50	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	47	62	46	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	39	67	50	7	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	67	50	64	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	85	63	48	36	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	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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



5 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St John Fisher School, Greenford, UB6 7AF**

Thank you for the warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of the positive comments which you and your parents and carers made about the school. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and by how well you respect and care for one another and the ways in which you help each other to learn and to succeed.

Yours is an outstanding school because:

- The headteacher and the staff care about you and help all of you to make good progress.
- There are lots of opportunities for you to develop your interests and skills, through clubs, visits and other activities, as well as in your lessons.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and give you enjoyable and exciting things to do.
- Your school is a pleasant, and exceptionally safe and happy place.

To help your school to be even better, we have asked the headteacher and her staff to challenge all of you, and especially those of you who find some of your work easy, by:

- using marking and information about what you know to set targets which will help you to improve
- giving you clear guidance on the next steps which you need to take to reach the highest standard of which you are capable.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Worgan  
Lead inspector

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