



# St John the Evangelist CofE Primary School Macclesfield

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111331  
**LEA** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 278660  
**Inspection dates** 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Brian Padgett HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Ivy Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Macclesfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Cheshire SK11 8QN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01625 428222
<b>Number on roll</b>	306	<b>Fax number</b>	01625 614686
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr N Raval
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M McCombe

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278660
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. There is a pre-school setting and a before- and after-school club on the school site. Both were inspected at the same time as the school by inspectors from Ofsted's Early Years Division. The report on the pre-school will be published separately. However, as the before- and after-school club is managed by the governing body its report is appended to this report on the school, and the main findings about the club are summarised within the text.

## Description of the school

The school serves the parish of St John the Evangelist in a residential area of Macclesfield, close to the town centre. It provides for pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds. Nearly all pupils are of white, British heritage. The proportion taking a school meal free of charge is below average. There are relatively few pupils with learning difficulties although a high proportion of these have significant problems with learning, such as those caused by autism. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need, an above average number for the size of the school.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Standards are consistently above average and pupils achieve well academically. They make especially good progress in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes) and in Key Stage 1. But the school excels most in promoting pupils' personal development: by Year 6 pupils are responsible, caring and confident young people who have excellent attitudes. The school has a wonderful ethos. It extends a genuine welcome to pupils and to the community. It is a vibrant school, with lots to interest and engage pupils in and out of lessons and one where their achievements are celebrated with pride. All pupils are valued, but those with learning difficulties and problems are cared and provided for very well. The before- and after-school club is judged satisfactory overall, but it has many good features.

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Teaching is often very effective, but it is not fully consistent and it is not as effective as it could be in the middle years where expectations and challenge could be higher. There are some aspects of management that could be improved but overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, senior staff and governors know their school well. There was close agreement about the strengths and weaknesses between the senior managers and the inspectors. The school has good capacity for further improvement because of the high level of professionalism of the staff and their commitment to do the best for all the pupils.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning in the middle years by adding more interest and challenge to lessons.
- Make management more effective by introducing more rigorous checks on teaching quality, by better use of performance data, and by focusing, in development plans, on outcomes for pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, achievement is good. Pupils make good progress.

The youngest children get off to a really good start in the Reception classes. Partly this is due to the close liaison between the pre-school setting and the school. For example, teachers know exactly at what stage of learning each child is, and waste no time in moving children on from their starting points. Because the pre-school is effective, children enter Reception with above average levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. They make very good progress in Reception and throughout Key Stage 1, where provision is also very good, and by the end of Year 2, standards are consistently well above average, especially in writing.

Progress during the earlier years in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, but pupils lose some ground compared to the promise they showed in Key Stage 1. Progress picks up towards

the end of Key Stage 2 as the quality of the teaching improves and the results of national tests at Year 6 are consistently above average. Nearly all pupils achieve the standards expected of pupils at 11 years, and a good proportion attain more highly than this.

Pupils with learning difficulties, including those with quite severe and complex needs, achieve very well and make very good progress in their academic and personal development. Their achievement demonstrates one of the key strengths of the school.

At present, a small but significant number of pupils leave the school in the upper juniors. This is to do with some parents trying to make sure their pupils move on to a preferred secondary school. Their loss makes the school appear to perform less well than it does.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development of the pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. The school's teaching about rights, responsibilities and respect are deeply embedded in its provision for personal development and pervade all aspects of its work. Pupils have a good appreciation of and interest in the spiritual side of life. They are extremely well mannered and well behaved. Attendance is well above average. They are confident young people able to make a contribution and they have a strong sense of fairness, and about what is right and wrong. Learning about religions and cultures outside the school's Christian foundation and white, British culture ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in a multi-cultural world.

Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and put their knowledge into practice very well through sport and physical activities in lessons, after school and in the after-school club. They know about healthy eating too, but in this respect, pupils are only just beginning to put their knowledge and understanding into effect. The recent development of a healthy lunch policy is helping, but healthy eating is at an early stage. Pupils feel safe in school, and the school council were positive that bullying and intimidation do not occur. The school council is an excellent example of pupils making a positive difference to the decisions taken in school, with a list of improvements to its name after only one year. In the learning of important knowledge, skills and attitudes, pupils are well prepared for economic well-being in the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. A distinctive feature of the school is the large number of adults involved in teaching and support in classes. As well as teachers, teaching assistants, both general and those supporting pupils with learning difficulties, parents helping in school, student teachers and students on work experience all make a significant contribution to

learning. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is very good. The volume of support often allows teachers to provide extra support to groups and individuals. One of the reasons why assessment is so effective in the Reception classes is that teaching assistants are free to observe children and note the progress they are making to inform the teachers. At the opposite end of the school, a group of less able pupils working separately with a senior teaching assistant make good progress, gaining in confidence and self esteem, because they receive support beyond that which one teacher could provide. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and friendly and this includes the relationships in the before- and after-school club. Teachers generally make good use of the interactive whiteboards and use information and communication technology (ICT) frequently. They prepare lessons of interest that capture the imagination of pupils and challenge their thinking, but this is not consistent throughout the school. Challenge, interest, the use of assessment and targets, and high expectations are less evident in classes in the lower juniors, although these characteristics of effective teaching re-emerge in the top two classes.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is of good quality, an improvement from the time of the last inspection. The basic skills are provided for well through an appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. These subjects are often taught alongside other subjects as topics or themes. They are linked meaningfully in ways that make sense to pupils. Some of these subjects, such as art and history, are amongst the pupils' favourites. Plans for pupils with learning difficulties are of good quality. Teachers enrich the curriculum well, through going on visits and inviting visitors to the school. These provide interest and excitement for pupils and motivate them to learn. As well as the after-school club, there is a good range of after-school activities, to extend the curriculum. The school is an integral part of the local faith community, and many of the assemblies and activities that take place at the school are associated with the church calendar. However, it is the provision for sport and physical activity that is very good, and this aspect of the curriculum is very popular with the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. The care for all pupils, but especially the more vulnerable, could hardly be bettered: it is a very special place. The procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are excellent, including the arrangements for child protection. Every care is taken to ensure pupils are safe, and that they feel safe and secure. Relationships are very good at all levels and there are many staff so pupils always have someone to turn to if they need help. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, and there is a strong culture within the school of older pupils looking out for the younger ones. There are good arrangements for pupils' safety and welfare in the before- and after-school club, and close liaison with the school. For example, 4 to 7 year-olds are safely collected from and delivered to their classes by the staff of

the club. The school has the overwhelming support of parents, including those of children with learning difficulties. The school tracks the progress of pupils carefully and has well developed systems of assessment and target setting. These are generally applied effectively, but not always so in some classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She is responsible for the very special ethos of the school and provides its vision and its sense of direction, for example, in the very good support for pupils with learning difficulties. She is committed to the pupils one hundred percent. She is supported well by an equally committed senior staff. The staff are approachable, open and receptive to new ideas. Governors are professional in their approach, very involved and they provide good challenge and support to the school. Subject leaders for each of the subjects, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, do a good job in advising and guiding their colleagues. Under the direction of the headteacher, very effective links have been forged with the pre-school setting and the before- and after-school club. The quality of the club's provision is good, but it is judged satisfactory overall because Ofsted was not informed of the change of manager as it should have been.

The senior staff and governors know their school well. The school's self evaluation is accurate, and is based on information from all of the school's stakeholders, including parents. The areas for improvement identified by inspectors did not come as a surprise and some had already formed the basis of action plans. Although not all parents agree with the school's policies in one respect or another, there is no single issue where parents are at odds with the school, and the school enjoys the support of the vast majority of parents. It is a welcoming and orderly school that is well managed and which functions smoothly and efficiently.

The school was judged as good in the last inspection in 2000 and it has maintained its strengths and improved since then. It provides good value for money. There are aspects of management that can be improved further. Improvements should be aimed at making sure that teaching is more consistently effective so that dips in progress can be identified and ironed out. At present the data on school performance is not interrogated sufficiently incisively to identify when progress slows; and senior managers do not check on teaching in classrooms sufficiently rigorously. Also, development

plans do not focus sufficiently on the intended outcomes for pupils so that these can be evaluated when the plans have been carried out. There is a good capacity for improvement. The senior staff are very professional, and they and governors are committed to doing their very best for pupils. They are open to ideas and support, including from the local authority, and the school is in a strong position to build on its present success.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, Mr Lawrence, Mr McDowell and I visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. Thank you for being so open, polite and friendly. We enjoyed our two days at St John's. I am writing to let you know what we found.

Firstly, we would like to congratulate you, the school council. We were very impressed how quickly you were developing and with what you have already achieved. We think you represent your classes well and that you discuss matters very maturely.

All in all, we think St John's is a good school. Children get off to a flying start in Reception and Years 1 and 2. By Year 6, you get good results and achieve well. This is very important, but equally importantly, you develop the right attitudes to learning, and we hope your good manners and the respect for each other that you have learned at St John's will stay with you for the rest of your lives. All your teachers work hard and that includes all the teaching assistants, parents, and students who work with you in lessons.

We loved the buzz about the school. You work hard and you have fun too. There was so much for you to do and become involved in, especially sport, and we noticed how some of you appreciated the time you have to yourselves in the before- and after-school club. We thought you were well cared for, especially so if you find learning difficult.

We believe that, behind the scenes, your school is in good hands. Mrs McCombe, the senior teachers, and the governors run the school well, and always act in your best interests. We have asked them to do two things to make the school even better. One is to make lessons more interesting and work more challenging in Classes 6 to 8, and the second is to tighten up some of the management procedures to make sure that every one of you is doing your best.

Of course, knowing how much you are involved in taking decisions, we are sure the members of the school council will play a full part in making sure St John's goes from strength to strength.

Thank you very much for helping us with the inspection.