



St John The Baptist C of E Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126027
LEA West Sussex
Inspection number 282045
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 7 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Capper AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Hill
School category	Voluntary aided		Findon
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		West Sussex BN14 0TR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01903 873072
Number on roll	136	Fax number	01903 877205
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr D Tomalin
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Richard Yelland

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small rural primary school takes pupils from the local village as well as surrounding areas. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average and there is a below average number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, with good features. Members of staff are particularly good at promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils are well cared for and they behave well. They are confident and articulate and enjoy the many interesting activities that the school provides outside lessons. Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are satisfactory.

Provision in the Reception class is satisfactory. Children start school with standards a little above those usually found. They make satisfactory progress and by the start of Year 1, standards are above those found nationally. The standards attained in the current Year 6 are above average and throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in most subjects. Pupils make good progress in reading but in science, where standards are only average, there is some underachievement, especially amongst the most able. This is because teachers do not always expect enough of pupils and there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning by applying their scientific knowledge in experiments. Teachers get on well with pupils and plan work that usually meets differing needs. However, they sometimes accept work that is poorly presented.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior managers have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. They realise that more needs to be done to raise achievement, and they have made a good start in doing this, especially in writing where there has been a significant rise in standards over the last year. Checks on teaching are systematic, but have not fully ironed out inconsistencies in teaching. This is because aspects of teaching that are identified as needing improvement are not always followed up with sufficient rigour. Nevertheless, weaknesses from the last inspection have been dealt with. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have high aspirations for the school and there is a strong commitment to ensuring that recent improvements are built on. Consequently, the school is in a good position to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve standards in science by ensuring that there is always enough challenge for pupils, especially the more able and by giving pupils more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Improve the presentation of work by ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations. Improve the quality of teaching by continuing to monitor lessons and ensuring that any areas for development are rigorously followed up.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the start of Year 1, standards are above those found nationally, with children in the current

Reception year making satisfactory progress from their above average starting points. Standards are especially high in personal, social and emotional development and in reading. Despite broadly average national test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2005 overall standards are higher than often found. This is because recent initiatives to improve attainment are beginning to take effect. In both the current Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics and are average in science. For several years, standards have been much higher in reading than in writing. Over the last two years, senior managers have focused on improving pupils' writing and this has resulted in better quality writing throughout the school. As a result, the proportion of pupils currently reaching above average levels in writing at the end of Year 2 has increased significantly.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory overall progress in Years 1 to 6. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils' progress is now more consistent across the school than in the past, with pupils in Years 1 to 3 in particular benefiting from being taught in single age classes for both numeracy and literacy lessons. This has had a good impact on the progress of younger pupils.

Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in reading. However, progress continues to be too slow in science because there is not always enough challenge, especially for more able pupils. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 and these were fully met in 2005.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' behaviour has improved significantly over the last three years and is now good. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. They enjoy coming to school and attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now very high. Pupils are good at organising activities such as chess and reading clubs, but have fewer opportunities to do things for themselves in lessons, particularly in science. For example, a group of pupils from different year groups said they did not enjoy science because they 'just had to write things down and not find out for themselves'.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They get on well together and are sociable and articulate. They enjoy taking responsibility and the school council represents the pupils well. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community particularly through their close involvement with the church and with village events. Pupils feel safe at school and understand how to stay safe and healthy. They talk very positively about the 'Grow it, Cook it' project, explaining how it has taught them about healthy food and caring for the environment. Pupils' good basic skills and their good self-confidence prepare them well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the Reception class, pupils make good progress in developing personal and social skills because the teacher expects a lot of the children and helps them to become independent. Throughout the school, teachers plan work carefully and provide work that generally builds on what pupils already know. However, on occasions teaching is not challenging enough and teachers do not always do enough to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This has the greatest impact in science, where more able pupils in particular, do not get enough opportunities to apply their scientific knowledge to their own investigations or experiments. All members of staff have good relationships with pupils. Teachers have good expectations of how well pupils should behave but some do not do enough to make sure that work is neat and tidy. This leads to the work of some older pupils being poorly presented. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and, increasingly, are adding comments or setting targets that help pupils to improve their work. This is a recent improvement that addresses a weakness from the last inspection. Interactive white boards make a positive contribution to learning, helping teachers to quickly introduce and explain new ideas. Teaching assistants provide good support particularly when working with small groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched by a good range of additional activities that support learning both inside and outside the classroom. Throughout the school, there is a clear focus on developing basic skills and the curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, pupils plant, grow and cook some of their own food, supported by experts from the Royal Horticultural Society and this helps them to learn about healthy lifestyles. A weakness in the curriculum is that although children are taught to be independent in the Reception class, this is not taken forward and does not develop well enough in the rest of the school. There is a good range of well attended clubs. A good number of visits and visitors help to make learning interesting. For example, visits from the fire brigade teach pupils how to stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Pupils feel that they are looked after well, and their parents agree. Child protection and welfare arrangements are thorough and the school works well with outside agencies and a 'family link' worker to safeguard pupils' well-being. Personal guidance and academic support are good because staff generally use assessment information well to meet individual pupils' needs, including those with learning difficulties. This is most effective in English and mathematics. In

science, more remains to be done to ensure that information about how well pupils are doing is used to plan consistently challenging work. There are good systems in place to support children when they start in the Reception year. Consequently, children settle well into the routines of school life. The buddy system where pupils support each other is particularly effective and welcomed by older and younger pupils. There is good liaison with the local secondary school, promoting a smooth transition for pupils at the end of Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well and there have been many good recent initiatives that have helped to improve the school. A good example of this is the way that the senior managers have tackled the underachievement of some pupils in writing so that progress is now more even across the school and standards have gone up. The role of subject co-ordinators has been significantly developed in the last year and subject leadership is now satisfactory. As they develop their skills and confidence, subject co-ordinators are taking a far more active lead in their subjects.

There are satisfactory systems for evaluating the work of the school. Parents and pupils are regularly consulted and play an active part in planning for school improvement. The use of test data has improved and senior managers are now beginning to use this information rigorously to identify and support pupils who could be doing better. The monitoring of teaching is systematic and there is a clear understanding of what needs improving, especially in science. However, there is still more to do to make sure teachers' expectations are high enough in all subjects. This is because aspects of teaching that are identified as needing improvement are not always followed up with sufficient rigour.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive but they are sometimes over-reliant on the headteacher for information. This makes it difficult for them to hold the school to account. Nevertheless, weaknesses from the last inspection have been dealt with. The school is improving quickly and is in a good position to improve further.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school in such a polite and friendly way and for showing us your work.

What we liked most about your school:

We are very pleased that you behave so well and enjoy school and all the activities that the school provides for you. We especially like the way that you grow some of your own food and take part in so many village events. Your teachers are very kind and caring and they look after you well. The school is good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe and healthy. You have a well-organised school council which lets you contribute so well to school life. Your headteacher and governors are working hard to make the school even better. Most of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

Help you to do better in science by making sure that your work is hard enough and by letting you carry out more of your own experiments. Make sure that you present your work more neatly. Make sure that the teaching gets even better.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future.