



## Inspection Report

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**Better  
education  
and care**

**Unique Reference Number** 126429  
**LEA** Wiltshire  
**Inspection number** 282111  
**Inspection dates** 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Faysal Mikdadi Al

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Wingfield Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Trowbridge
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Wiltshire BA14 9EA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 752006
<b>Number on roll</b>	311	<b>Fax number</b>	01225 769606
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Canon L O'Driscoll
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kim Parnell

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Pupils come from a wide geographical area, reflecting parental choice for a Catholic education. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. Almost all pupils are White British. The school has been through a period of instability chiefly related to changes in leadership and management over the last four years. Since the last inspection the school has had four headteachers, including an acting headteacher for two terms and the current headteacher, who has been in post since September 2005.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to enhancing progress further, raising standards, improving curriculum planning and tackling barriers to effective teaching.

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that St John's is not currently providing an effective education and is therefore not providing value for money. Unsatisfactory leadership and management over the last four years have led to a decline in standards and the quality of teaching. Although test results are close to the average, pupils could be doing better. Until recently, there has been limited progress in tackling the issues from the last inspection. Through effective leadership the new headteacher has made many improvements in a short time. She now ensures rigorous checks are made on the quality of teaching which, despite improvements, remains unsatisfactory. With senior staff she has established a good learning environment so that pupils are settled, enjoy their work and are achieving better. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is now satisfactory. These changes show that the school has the capacity to sustain further improvement.

Pupils are courteous and pleasant and their behaviour is now good and often better. The new headteacher has enhanced learning through improving the quality of care, guidance and support. As a result, the pupils are more involved in their learning and school activities. For example, they take responsibility in a variety of ways, such as being representatives on the school council and by participating in the 'buddy' system. However, the curriculum is unsatisfactory because it does not provide sufficient variety to match the differing needs of each individual pupil.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers make better use of information about pupils' progress to plan lessons and set challenging targets for pupils in order to improve their achievement.
- Improve curriculum planning in order to ensure that tasks set are sufficiently varied so that they match the pupils' varying abilities.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Although standards are average, pupils have not been making enough progress in their work. Pupils in the Foundation Stage start school with skills and knowledge which are average for their age and by the time that they enter Year 1 the majority in one class have reached the goals they need to start the National Curriculum. However, this is not the situation for the other class, although

their standards are starting to improve. As a result of improved teaching, pupils in Years 1 to 6 have made sound progress in the current academic year. By Year 2 pupils reached standards slightly above average in the last national tests. Year 6 pupils in particular are now in a better position to reach the challenging targets set for them, but the school rightly recognises that there is still much to do to accelerate the progress that pupils make.

The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is sound. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are currently making satisfactory progress because teaching is ensuring that their needs are met, although, as for all pupils in the school, curricular provision does not always match their varying abilities. Music is a particular strength of the school and pupils achieve well, particularly in singing.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are valued as individuals, encouraged to reflect on important questions and nurtured within a strongly Catholic ethos. As a result, their spiritual development is very good. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and their behaviour is good and sometimes very good. On special occasions such as assemblies, behaviour is outstanding. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. However, they say that they do not enjoy lessons that are not interesting. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for them to take on responsibilities and pupils take on jobs willingly. Some older pupils run lunchtime activities for younger pupils.

Pupils' contribution to the wider community is good. They have good knowledge of their own faith, although not of other world faiths. The older pupils know about healthy diets. They also know about other important health choices appropriate for their age. The younger children are less well informed and consequently they do not have sufficient knowledge about the need for healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. Pupils are encouraged to be active in physical education and through a range of physical activities provided by the school. Progress made in learning basic skills to ensure pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and have resulted in pupils failing to make enough progress. Teachers have not had a clear view about pupils' previous attainment so they have not been able to plan effective lessons and set precise targets for pupils' performance. This is beginning to change, although the overall picture is still mixed. In many classrooms improvement is rapid and the impact of recent initiatives is beginning to improve pupils' achievement. In the Foundation Stage, although standards

for some pupils are still below average, most are making satisfactory progress because of improvements in teaching but the impact is not yet fully apparent. Across the school, the better lessons are well planned; have a clear focus and tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. In these classrooms pupils know what the lesson is about and have suitable targets to work towards. However, a few teachers are not improving their effectiveness and not meeting the standards now expected by the school. The effort to improve the quality of teaching is further complicated by the high rate of staff absence, which also affects pupils' learning. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning by helping them achieve success. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities now make satisfactory progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 4**

The curriculum is unsatisfactory because the work planned does not cater sufficiently for the needs of different groups of pupils. Older pupils find that they repeat work in mathematics when they are in the same class for two years running. However, things are improving. For example, in science, the school now ensures that pupils cover the requirements whilst not repeating topics unnecessarily. In most classes pupils now have good opportunities to use computers but in a few classes these are still too limited.

The school successfully enables individuals to be withdrawn for additional help and adapts the curriculum satisfactorily to meet the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Across the school the curriculum is not sufficiently modified to make sure the different groups of pupils in each class make consistent progress in each year. The school benefits from specialist teaching in music and this is leading to good standards in music, particularly in singing. The school organises a good range of extra-curricular clubs to support the physical education curriculum and there is a satisfactory range of clubs to enhance learning in other subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Good care is provided for individual pupils. Pupils are known well to all staff and everyone is committed to making sure pupils feel safe and secure in school. The school takes care to make sure pupils know how to keep safe and healthy. There are good arrangements for child protection. In the main, satisfactory guidance and support help pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to make sound progress, although there is not enough support for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Assessment practices are now more consistent across the school and satisfactory. As a result, teachers are able to set realistic but challenging targets for improvement. The school does not have a system whereby the senior management team can see how well individual pupils are doing at a glance, to identify whether they make the progress that they should.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Unsatisfactory leadership and management over the last few years have led to deterioration in teaching and pupils' achievement. The school does not currently provide value for money. Since her arrival in September 2005, the new headteacher's good leadership has brought about improvements in teaching, learning, assessment, monitoring and evaluating, although weaknesses still remain in these areas. These improvements have begun to show through in the pupils' progress. For example, pupils in Year 6 are now likely to achieve the targets set for them. Improved provision for pupils with learning difficulties now means they are making satisfactory progress.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher presents a convincing argument of what needs to be done in order to make further improvements. A capable deputy and senior staff effectively support her.

Governors have worked closely with staff in recent times to enable improvements in behaviour and in the overall atmosphere for learning in the school. The support given by the local authority is helping to maintain improvements. Parents' views of the school are positive. They judge the work being done by the new headteacher particularly highly. They are fully supportive of her and her colleagues' work. Judging by the improvements made since last September and the clear plans now laid out for future development, the headteacher, senior team and governors have the capacity to improve the school 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>	<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>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	4	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	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	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	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

<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**

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed the Ash Wednesday assembly. Your singing was lovely.

I am writing to tell you what we think of your school.

There are several things about your school which are good:

You behave well around the school and in the classrooms.

Since the arrival of the new headteacher in September 2005, there have been a lot of improvements in the school.

The adults look after you well.

You have many opportunities to take on responsibilities and to join in activities.

You told us that you liked your school. You also said that a lot of things have improved since the new headteacher arrived. We agree with you. You also told us that occasionally you found some lessons boring. We have suggested that the school should improve more by doing the following:

Make sure that you are always taught in a way that helps you to do better in your work.

Make sure that your teachers tell you exactly what you need to do in order to improve further and that they plan their lessons in a way that allows you to improve your work even more.

Once again, thank you for all your help. We wish you the very best at your school.