



# Knutton St Mary's Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 133993  
**LEA** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 282415  
**Inspection dates** 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Doris Bell AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Knutton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Newcastle, Staffordshire ST5 6EB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 297337
<b>Number on roll</b>	269	<b>Fax number</b>	01782 297337
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Colin Brassington
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Fletcher

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	26 June 2006 - 27 June 2006	282415

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves an area that has very many social and economic disadvantages. Children's attainment on entry is very low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. The school was formed in 2004 following the lengthy amalgamation of two junior schools and an infant school. After many significant changes and much disruption, staffing has now stabilised and the school is looking forward with renewed hope and vigour.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Inspectors judge the school's effectiveness to be satisfactory. This agrees with the school's view of itself. The unique situation in which it found itself during and after the amalgamation has been managed well. Provision and progress are good in the Foundation Stage. Here, as in the rest of the school, standards are exceptionally low but they are improving. Pupils' achievement has improved and is now satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. The successful nurturing of pupils' behaviour and attitudes, both of which are now good, has contributed greatly to this. With the current stable staff, teaching is now satisfactory. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are supported well, but insufficient attention is given to helping more-able pupils to learn faster. Assessment systems, including the recording of pupils' progress, are satisfactory but they are complex and unnecessarily time-consuming. The school recognises these weaknesses and is working on both of them. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very underdeveloped when they start school and this hinders their overall progress. The school makes very good use of its strong links with the local authority, other external agencies, parents and the community to help it tackle this problem. Pupils' skills are improving because the leaders and managers, and particularly the headteacher, have provided very clear direction. Involvement in an Intensive Support Programme (ISP) has successfully ensured that it knows how to build on its strengths and tackle its weaknesses. All of this gives the school good capacity for further improvement. It provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Focus more rigorously and with greater consistency on identifying the key vocabulary required in all lessons in order to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills faster.
- Sharpen all assessment systems so that information gained from analysing pupils' progress is used more frequently and more effectively to increase the pace of learning for all pupils, including the most able.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Improved teaching, which is the result of recent stability in staffing, has successfully accelerated pupils' overall achievement, and this is now satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress but the poor communication and personal skills with which they start school hinder their progress in English and other subjects for some considerable time. Standards are exceptionally low in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 but there is evidence of improvement. The assessments for pupils in Year 2 show significant improvement on last year. Early indications from the Year 6 mathematics results are that standards have also improved in that subject. The school's own records show that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing. The school can provide well-founded reasons for why some pupils do not do as well as expected. It works hard to reach its challenging targets, which are based on the

secure assessment of pupils' learning. Last year, it exceeded the targets set for English and mathematics and it has also exceeded its mathematics target this year.

The good support provided for vulnerable pupils and pupils with learning difficulties contributes in great measure to their satisfactory progress. However, more-able pupils do not always do as well as they should because opportunities are missed to help them do so. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are making good progress in learning to use and speak the English language.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Good personal development and well being, including good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, contributes much to pupils' improving achievement. It starts at the earliest age, enabling the youngest children to settle quickly into school routines. Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. However, despite the school's best efforts, attendance is only satisfactory. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils are very proud of the 'Mini Mac' system and of the school council's part in introducing a friendship bench. Both have resulted in pupils successfully helping and supporting each other. They are very secure about approaching staff, confident in the knowledge that they will receive help to deal with any problems, in or out of school. They gave many examples of this.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and they know that it is important to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to eat healthily. Pupils readily accept responsibility, for example, as the Year 6 management team who stand in for office staff at lunchtimes. They contribute well to the community and have a good sense of social awareness. Their good social skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being, but their underdeveloped literacy and numeracy skills hinder their overall progress in this aspect of their learning, which, overall, is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is now satisfactory. Several examples of good teaching were observed during the inspection and teaching is good in the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan lessons well using their good knowledge of pupils' progress. Work is usually accurately matched to the pupils' different stages of learning. This is not always the case for more-able pupils and it sometimes hinders their progress. Most teachers are skilled at promoting speaking and listening skills through discussion and questioning. However, they do not consistently identify in their planning the key vocabulary they are going to use in each lesson. They therefore miss opportunities to develop pupils' vocabulary at a faster rate.

Pupils who are vulnerable, or who find learning difficult for whatever reason, are supported well. Initiatives such as the nurture groups and the good use of well-briefed

teaching assistants help them to make at least satisfactory progress towards their targets. Pupils understand their targets, know how to improve their work and speak highly of the way staff show them what they need to do. However, marking rarely refers to pupils' targets. Teachers ensure that learning activities are highly practical and include well-chosen opportunities for drama, role play and the use of puppets. This is right for this school. There is a strong emphasis on using ICT in all subjects, thereby contributing to pupils' progress in that subject.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Good features of the otherwise satisfactory curriculum include the wide range of enriching activities that successfully enhance pupils' learning and personal development. There is an understandably strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT. The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and the school works very hard to provide pupils of all ages with opportunities they might not otherwise have. Visits, including a residential visit, many visitors and a good number of clubs and activities contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school, as does the well-considered focus on practical, interactive work and on developing creativity. However, the school is not yet capitalising on these to maximise learning fully, by, for example, linking subjects together and providing additional challenge for more-able pupils. The school is aware of this and has plans in place to improve the curriculum next term.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's very welcoming ethos and strong family atmosphere reflect the outstanding care, guidance and support given to pupils. Pupils in all age groups very much appreciate what the school does for them, several describing it as a 'second family.' This is echoed in the parents' responses, one of whom stated that 'the school is dedicated to every single pupil's education...it has a sense of belonging.' Health, safety and child protection procedures are clear and well known throughout the school, as are the effective policies for dealing with any form of harassment. In its drive to help pupils learn better, the school has two well-established nurture groups. It sensitively moves pupils into different years to address specific learning needs and uses a wide range of external agencies very effectively to support vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties. The very good guidance they receive helps them to improve personally and academically. Year 6 pupils are very apprehensive about the move to secondary school but the school does everything it can to ease the transition for them.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

While leadership and management are satisfactory overall, the headteacher's leadership is good. She sensitively guided the school through an extremely challenging and

unsettled period, keeping staff focused on improving pupils' learning. She has given the school a clear direction and strong sense of purpose which is shared by all staff and governors, and has resulted in good teamwork throughout the school.

Based on accurate self-review, the leadership team has established a range of effective strategies that are successfully raising achievement. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. However, subject leadership, which is rapidly improving in literacy and numeracy, is less well developed overall. The school is making very good use of the ISP and its very good partnership with the local authority to help it in this respect. It knows what it needs to do and its priorities are set down clearly in a well-structured school improvement plan. They include the two areas inspectors are asking the school to address with even greater urgency. Good account is taken of the views of pupils, parents and governors and the school uses external agencies well. Governors fulfil their roles satisfactorily. They and the staff are highly committed to raising achievement. This and the improvement evident since the amalgamation give the school good capacity for further improvement.





## 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>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### 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>	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	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	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>	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

<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 for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about yourselves and your work. It was very pleasing to see how secure and happy you are at school and how much you appreciate what the school does for you. Here are some of the things we found that were good about your school:

- Your behaviour is good. You are keen to help everyone and are especially proud of the 'Mini Mac' system and the way the school operates as your 'second family.'
- You like the way Circle Time helps you to solve personal problems. You rightly trust your teachers and the headteacher to support you at all times. The way they do this is excellent.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe, and of why it is important to keep fit and healthy.
- Your headteacher leads and manages the school well. She is helping your teachers to help you to make faster progress.

We have asked your school to help you to learn faster by:

- identifying the vocabulary they especially want you to learn in each lesson and checking that you always understand it.
- finding ways to make it even easier for your teachers and the headteacher to check how much progress you are making, and how quickly.

We wish you well and hope that you will continue to enjoy learning more and more as you grow up.