

# St John's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101321
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	286030
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Gray

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Clark
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 February 2001
<b>School address</b>	Swan Lane Whetstone London N20 0PL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8445 4693
<b>Fax number</b>	087 0762 0508

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is high though very few are at the early stage of learning English. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, a mixture which is average overall. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to that found in most schools. The school holds the Healthy Schools' Award.

## 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 which has rightly set its sights on becoming outstanding. Good leadership and management are moving the school quickly along this road. One parent commented, 'St John's is a great school and I am so grateful that my kids are part of the school community'. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have exemplary attitudes to learning and show great interest in all they do. This produces outstanding behaviour. Pupils say 'We are all against bullying' and insist that it is virtually non-existent in their school. Pupils are very conscious of the need to keep healthy because 'if you were sick, you wouldn't learn'. The school council's work to make school lunches healthier was mentioned (by a non-member) as evidence of the very good role they play in the school's life. Pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards by the time they leave. Children in the Foundation Stage have a good start to their schooling. The accommodation is bright and interesting and activities are fun. Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception because teachers plan very well to meet individual needs. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6. Pupils clearly enjoy lessons very much and say they are interesting because 'we're not just sitting down', as one said. 'We use laptops and do experiments'. Teachers plan a variety of activities to meet the range of pupils' needs. However, the level of challenge for brighter pupils is not always hard enough. This is because the systems of assessment which the school uses are new. Current information about the levels that pupils are reaching is not always readily available for teachers to use when planning their lessons. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good, with outstanding pastoral care. It is this that results in pupils' excellent personal development. As one parent wrote, 'St John's places a welcome emphasis on providing a caring and supportive culture for the children.' The school curriculum is good with very good enrichment activities, such as visits and school clubs. Pupils are very proud of their bands, such as the Year 6 guitar and piano group which makes its own recordings. Work is underway to link the subjects of the curriculum together, to add greater meaning to pupils' learning. A very good example was seen in Year 4, where pupils were using literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to explore the feelings of parents and child over a runaway boy. The use of the 'conscience alley' at the end of the lesson showed how well the pupils had explored personal feelings. Leadership and management are good and are focused on the right issues to take the school forward. The headteacher gives an excellent lead and she is well supported by her deputy, all staff and governors. The good start already achieved on the two areas for development mentioned below shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Complete the new systems for tracking pupils' progress, so that teachers can always incorporate up to date assessment information when planning appropriate challenge for their pupils, especially the higher attainers.
- Further establish those curriculum links that enhance pupils' learning and skills.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children enter the school with skills that are similar to those found among most three year olds. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception towards the learning goals expected of five-year-olds. By the time they enter Year 1 these assessments show that children are achieving above the borough average. Pupils continue to

make good progress, reaching above average standards by Year 2 and well above by Year 6. Measures of the value added by the school are above average. Standards are also above expectations in ICT.

In 2006, higher attaining pupils did less well than other pupils in the Year 2 national assessments in reading and writing and in the Year 6 science tests. The school has worked to increase the percentages of pupils at the higher levels in the 2007 tests and assessments, with considerable success. However, higher attaining pupils do not always receive sufficient challenge in their day-to-day work. 'The work is sometimes a bit easy,' said a couple of pupils. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties achieve as well as other pupils.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident from their excellent attitudes in class and high attendance rates. They cooperate very well and enjoy discussing and developing their work. This was clear in a Year 5 lesson, where pupils were working in pairs to write a script for a radio commentary on an Olympic race that was showing on the interactive whiteboard. Very good levels of working together produced exciting dialogues which the pupils were going to record. Pupils understand why healthy lifestyles are important for them and take plenty of exercise. They are confident that the school is a safe place and that the adults care for them.

The outstanding behaviour of the pupils shows that they have excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are considerate of others' views and know that what counts is 'really getting to know other people'. Pupils make good contributions to the wider community through the charitable donations that they choose themselves and through performances of the choir and musical groups around the borough. Their good progress in basic skills stands them in good stead for the next phase of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Foundation Stage teaching is carefully tailored to pupils' needs and interests. One Nursery parent wrote: 'My daughter loves every minute of it'. Activities meet pupils' needs well, as seen when Reception children were recording numbers on a snake. Most were writing the numbers to ten, but a few were increasing them by two and one child by four.

Teachers in Years 1 to 6 have very good relationships with the pupils which are the foundation of pupils' excellent attitudes. Teachers use modern technology well in their lessons, which gives access to a wide scope of resources to deepen pupils' interest. A recent initiative has been to plan different learning intentions for different groups. This has worked well and has resulted in more pupils reaching higher levels. However, it is not consistent in all classes, so that higher attaining pupils are not always being challenged enough.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with outstanding elements in the enrichment activities offered to pupils. Musical and sporting activities are popular with pupils. Good use was made of a recent visit by

Year 6 pupils to Cornwall when they used ICT skills to design informative flyer-leaflets for advertising holiday destinations. ICT is used frequently to enhance pupils' learning, such as the sequence of images and music that Year 5 pupils made to illustrate the experiences of evacuee children during the Second World War. Linking subjects in this way is a current development in the school's curriculum and its success can be judged from comments such as this from a parent: 'Lessons have been stimulating and creative and the learning environment allows children to make good progress.' The plans for this creative learning are in the process of being drawn up.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. Pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils trust all the adults to help and support them, whatever their problems. Parents greatly appreciate this and one commented, 'St John's is a caring and friendly school and has a lovely atmosphere. I feel lucky that my daughter is at this school.' Procedures for child protection are thorough and exceed requirements. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good and enables them to make good progress.

The school has introduced a new system of assessment during this year, to enable teachers to be more accountable for the progress of their pupils. It is a helpful system, but as yet does not contain enough termly data to allow staff to keep as close an eye on pupils' progress as they plan to, once the system is complete.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives outstanding direction and her great enthusiasm for continual school improvement imparts itself effectively to all staff and governors. She is well supported by her deputy and senior staff. Self-evaluation is used well to highlight and develop weaker areas, as is shown by the decision to replan the curriculum and introduce more detailed assessment to sit alongside it. The school improvement plan is thorough, but it contains too much detail, so that it is not easy to see and keep track on the chief priorities. Middle managers are increasing their accountability for their subjects, as can be seen from their work with governors to increase governors' first-hand knowledge of the school. Governors use their expertise well for the benefit of the school and are keen to make their work even more effective, as shown by the recent curriculum evenings for parents, planned and led by governors themselves. Parents praised these in their responses to the questionnaire and want more.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

3 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's CofE Primary School, London, N20 0PL

I enjoyed my visit to your school and want to thank you for the polite and friendly way in which you received me. I was very pleased when one of the youngest children told me 'I know your name'. I was also delighted to receive apologies from members of the school council who were unable to meet me because of the inter-school sports. I'm glad the rain held off.

You go to a good school and your parents agree. Many of them wrote to tell me what they liked best and I asked some of you the same question. One of you replied, 'The adults are always kind and supportive.' You repay them with your excellent behaviour, good manners and outstanding attitudes to lessons. You not only know about keeping safe and healthy but can explain why it is important. You help in the running of the school through the school council and the many other responsibilities you take on.

Teaching is good and you told me how much you enjoy activities. You like lessons best when they let you use your different skills in approaching a topic. The school is working to link all your subjects together and this is something I have asked them to continue.

All the adults take extremely good care of you and make sure that the school is a happy place to be. They track your progress well and are improving the way they do this. I have asked them to collect information on your progress in such a way as to be able to give you just the right amount of challenge, especially those of you who learn the fastest.

Your headteacher and all her staff do a good job in making the school the popular and successful place it is. I hope you all continue to enjoy your time at St John's.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray  
Inspector