

St John's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102027
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	286252
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Adil Vittachi
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Notley
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Theobalds Park Road Enfield EN2 9BD
Telephone number	020 8363 4709
Fax number	020 8367 1284

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals is small. A quarter of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities; this is more than average.

A new headteacher took up the leadership of the school in September 2006. In the last year, three of the four classes have had a new teacher, the most recent in Years 1 and 2 in February 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is currently satisfactory. Following a period of considerable disruption and many changes of staff it is improving rapidly under the strong leadership of the new headteacher. In a relatively short time the progress many pupils make has accelerated. Standards have risen by the end of Year 6 but in Years 1 and 2, where changes are most recent, there has not been enough time to eradicate earlier underachievement and reverse the decline in attainment. Standards, particularly in writing, are currently too low at the end of Year 2.

The teaching is satisfactory. Lessons in Years 3 to 6 are good and many pupils are now making good progress. The teaching in Years 1 and 2, although satisfactory, is not yet having the same impact. Nevertheless, the relentless drive for improvement is transforming the school. A parent commented that recent changes have made, 'a huge improvement.' The headteacher's approach to recruitment of staff has established a settled and committed team unified in its determination to raise standards to high levels. Recent improvements to the building have brought better conditions for learning in some areas of the school.

The Foundation Stage classroom has yet to benefit from a planned refurbishment. In spite of the less than ideal accommodation the newly appointed teachers and their assistants provide an exciting range of activities for the children. As a result, the youngest children are now making good progress and are well prepared for their imminent move to Year 1.

The teacher's assess the pupils' progress but the information they collect is not always used incisively enough to plan what the pupils need to learn next. Helpful prompts are prominently displayed and pupils have targets to improve their work but these are not used consistently well enough to continue to raise standards. The pupils' work is conscientiously marked but does not give them clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their next piece of work.

The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched and enhanced by a wide range of activities that pupils greatly enjoy and leads to their good personal development and well-being. The pupils make a very good contribution to the community.

The headteacher spearheads the good leadership and management in the school. In collaboration with the senior management team she is systematically tackling and removing obstacles to higher achievement. Through robust monitoring of all aspects of the school's work high expectations of what can be achieved are being rigorously pursued. Much has been achieved in the last nine months and the school is very well placed to continue to improve quickly. An inspection report, written by a pupil as a literacy activity, concluded, 'if they keep on improving St John's school will be by far the best school in the entire borough.'

The governors, like many parents, are very pleased with the recent improvements. They give the school very good support and are well informed about the school's performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by the end of Year 2, particularly in writing, by ensuring that teaching focuses sharply on developing the pupils' skills.
- Improve marking and target setting so that pupils know what they need to do to continually improve their work and reach the highest standards.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry is broadly average. The children are now getting off to a good start and reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have been above average for several years but declined last year and have slipped further this year. Standards are now average in reading and mathematics but remain too low in writing. The pupils are now making satisfactory progress but earlier underachievement means they have fallen a long way short of the standards they should have reached, particularly in writing.

Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now making good progress. The school's own records and the work in pupil's books confirm that standards are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. This is a marked improvement on the pronounced decline at the end of Year 6 where standards were significantly below average in 2006. The progress made by pupils between Year 2 and Year 6 fell into the bottom 10% of schools last year. The reversal this year is due to the good teaching in Years 3 to 6 and the strong leadership of the headteacher.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They say they feel safe and are well cared for. Their attendance is satisfactory. Most are at school on time but a few are not punctual. Pupils behave well in lessons and get on well on the playground. In the Foundation Stage the children's personal development is good and they are becoming increasingly independent.

Spiritual, moral, social and culture development is good. Many older pupils have developed a responsibility to care for others. Their cultural development is extended by interesting art work, the use of film and involvement in activities such as Black History week. Pupils have adopted a healthier lifestyle and have an excellent grasp of the importance of a balanced diet and exercise. They participate fully in a good range of sporting activities and most walk to school on Wednesdays. The pupils make an excellent contribution to their own and the wider community, not least in their fund raising for cancer charities. The school council has been instrumental in bringing improvements, such as better playground equipment. They would also like a safer play surface and plans are advancing to provide one.

The pupils generally co-operate and work effectively together. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary education but in Years 1 and 2 they have not yet overcome earlier underachievement and are not as well prepared for the next stage in their education as they should be.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The teaching is satisfactory because significant inconsistencies in the progress pupils make, in Years 1 and 2, remain. Whilst the teaching is now satisfactory it is taking time to ensure that accurate assessment is used to match tasks precisely to the pupils needs. Consequently there are occasions when work is either too easy or too hard for some pupils.

In the Foundation Stage the teaching is good. It is effective because it is lively and generates independence. The indoor and outdoor areas are used well to provide teacher led tasks and activities the children can chose for themselves.

In Years 3 to 6 pupils are encouraged to contribute fully to lessons and rise to the challenges set by the teachers. Teachers make it clear what they expect them to learn in lessons. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond very positively to thoughtful questioning and listen carefully to explanations. As a result, learning moves along at a good pace. Tasks engage the pupils who display very mature attitudes to learning. This was evident in a very interesting literacy lesson which examined how the soundtrack of an animated film conveyed the setting and colour of the story.

Marking is detailed and lets the pupils know how well they have done but it does not consistently tell them what they need to do to improve their next piece of work. In some pupils' work the teacher's marking repeatedly reminds them to use capital letters and full stops but no effective action has been taken to remedy this weakness.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum that is being thoughtfully reviewed and improved. It is broad, covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and is enhanced by a wide range of opportunities for trips and visits that extend learning. There is a good range of school clubs and activities that are appreciated by the pupils and add to their great enjoyment.

The good organisation, wide variety and purposefulness of Foundation Stage curriculum are the main reasons why the youngest children are now making good progress.

The older pupils have good opportunities to write for a range of purposes in different contexts. This has helped to raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6.

The newly opened ICT suite provides the school with good facilities that it has lacked until very recently. Nevertheless, by using a local centre the school has provided interesting opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The school takes appropriate steps to make sure that pupils feel safe and well cared for. The required checks are carried out on all adults who work in the school.

The headteacher sets high expectation of care and celebrates the actions of, for example, older pupils who help and support the youngest children. She also reminds pupils and parents of the

need for full and punctual attendance. Developments of a new kitchen, improved school meals and a healthy schools award have done much to encourage pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Pupils are well supported in lessons, particularly those with learning difficulties. Teaching assistants provide accomplished additional individual and small group teaching. In many respects the teachers provide good academic guidance for the pupils but target setting is not yet sharp enough to help the pupils to make further and rapid improvements to their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has made significant improvements that have transformed the school's performance, notably by raising standards at the end of Year 6. More recently, in collaboration with the deputy headteacher, she has turned her attention to making similar and significant improvements at the end of Year 2 but has not had enough time to have the same impact.

The expectation of high achievement is being consistently fostered through all improvement activities. The school improvement plan is currently being sharpened and honed to bring further enhancement in key areas for the school's provision and performance. Monitoring is incisive and used very effectively to refine and improve teaching and learning.

The governors support the school well. By visiting the school and inviting teachers to curriculum committee meetings they keep a watchful eye on the school's performance. The headteacher's detailed reports keep them abreast of progress on improvement activities.

Parents and pupils' views are sought and acted upon. Partnerships with parents are growing. They are being well informed. For example the teachers in the Foundation stage are now providing very useful guidance on how parents can help their children at home in all six areas of learning.

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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	School Overall
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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
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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
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

19 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's CofE Primary School, Enfield, EN2 9BD

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to me. You go to a school that is improving rapidly following a period where there have been a lot of changes. Some of you told me how much things have changed and how your teachers are making lessons fun.

You are able to learn in a friendly atmosphere where the adults take good care of you. You behave well and listen carefully to each other's views. Most of you are doing well in lessons. You concentrate on your work and make good progress. However, some of you are still catching up so I have asked the teachers to really concentrate on raising standards by the end of Year 2, particularly in writing.

In the Nursery and Reception the children have lots of exciting activities. The teachers also make lessons interesting and lively for the rest of you. They mark your work very carefully but it is not always clear what you need to do to improve your next piece of work. I have asked the teachers to look at ways of helping you to make each piece of work you do, better than the last, so that you reach high standards.

The headteacher and teachers are finding ways of making your school better and better. They are a good team and have achieved a lot in a short time. I enjoyed being in your school. I hope that in the future it is very successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker Lead inspector