

# St John the Evangelist Church of England Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110093
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310204
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Earish

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend Bernard Dagnall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janis Goodenough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Old Newtown Road Newbury RG14 7DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01635 41281
<b>Fax number</b>	01635 38264

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<b>Age group</b>	3-7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. The inspector looked particularly at the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on pupils' progress as well as the effectiveness of school managers at sustaining improvements in standards and progress. The inspector met with staff, governors and pupils. Parts of some lessons were observed. Parents' questionnaires and a sample of pupils' work were examined and school information, including self-evaluation, was scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

This averaged sized school serves the centre of the town. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from mostly Asian or Eastern European backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, particularly those who struggle with reading and writing or find it difficult to always behave well, is similar to that found nationally. The school has achieved the Healthy School Enhanced Award, Sport England Activemark and Artsmark Gold.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This good school constantly seeks improvement. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much and achieve well. Parents too, believe the school, '...is very friendly and welcoming and teachers have very good relationships with the children. Its ethos is based on Christian and family values.'

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average overall by the age of seven. The school has successfully addressed the recent fall in the numbers of more able pupils attaining the higher levels, particularly in writing, with boy's attainment showing considerable improvement. Pupils have mostly exceeded their challenging targets this year. All groups of pupils, including those who struggle with reading and writing make good progress and achieve well. Those very few pupils who have English as additional language also achieve well.

Achievement is good because teaching and learning are good overall, with examples of highly effective teaching. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson the teachers made excellent use of drama and role-play so that children could experience life as evacuees during the Second World War. Adults and children dressed up in costume and acted in character before writing letters home explaining how they missed their parents. Pupils were engrossed and made much better progress than might be expected. The teachers are good at matching work to pupils' different capabilities and providing good levels of challenge. Tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and accurate. Occasionally, the introductions to some lessons can be overlong and complicated. Consequently, the opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas and be responsible for their own learning are reduced.

Another reason for the school's success is the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being, including their spiritual moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and learning. They have an exceptionally good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and very well developed social skills and personal qualities for their age. Pupils take great pride in their responsibilities and make an excellent contribution to their own and the wider community. For example, they are helping to raise money, in partnership with the local church, to build a primary school in one of the poorest regions in Ghana. A small minority of parents raised concerns about the behaviour of a very few older pupils. However, the inspector saw good behaviour both in lessons and in corridors. Those very few pupils identified as having difficulties with their behaviour are very well supported and have appropriate measures in place to help them to modify their behaviour. Pupils' determination to succeed and good attendance are further evidence of their enjoyment and commitment to learning. This is excellent preparation for future life and learning.

Care, guidance and support are good overall with exceptional strengths in all aspects of pastoral care. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and very well looked after. Adults are effective at tracking and supporting the pupils' personal and academic progress so they can achieve well. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing for themselves how well they are doing and what they need to improve. However, this is still at an early stage of development and is not consistent across the school.

The good curriculum is constantly evolving and captures pupils' enthusiasm and interests. It meets the basic academic needs of pupils well, and supports their social and personal development extremely effectively through initiatives to encourage healthy living and staying safe. There are a very good number of enrichment opportunities. These include numerous visits and trips, visiting artists and musicians, musical and sporting activities, French and computer

clubs. This adds much to the pupils' motivation to learn, work hard and succeed. The school has rightly identified the need to review and extend opportunities for writing in other subjects in order to consolidate the recent improvements in standards.

All the adults are constantly looking at ways to improve the quality of learning so that it is lively, energetic and active. Effective monitoring of the schools work results in managers having a good understanding of the schools main strengths and relative weaknesses. School improvement plans, built upon accurate and detailed school evaluations, are helping to make further improvements. Class teachers are receiving good quality support to increase their confidence at monitoring the impact of new initiatives in terms of improved performance. The governors are making a good contribution to the strategic management of the school by acting as an effective critical friend. They are working with staff to review their 'Vision' for the school and are considering ways to include the views of parents and children. They are also exploring new ways of ensuring their monitoring of the performance of the children and the school remains effective. There is a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum provides a good balance between those activities led by an adult and those initiated by children. Consequently, children make a confident and positive start to school life. Most children join the school with standards that are similar to that expected for their age. They achieve well and most reach levels expected levels by the time they start in Year 1 and a few exceed them. The quality of teaching is good. The good start children make in the Foundation Stage prepares them well for the next stage in their learning. Parents are extremely positive and supportive as one said, 'In a relatively short time my son has developed greatly which must be in part down to a stimulating and caring environment'. Another wrote, 'The school has been fantastic settling (my daughter) into school life. I rate the school highly.'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across the curriculum.
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to assess their own work so they have an even better understanding what they need to do to improve.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

18 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St John the Evangelist Church of England Infant and Nursery School, Newbury, RG14 7DE

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I believe, like you, that you go to a good school. I was very impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other.

I particularly liked the fact that you do well in reading, writing and mathematics. I especially enjoyed talking to you about your work and was impressed with your enthusiasm for school. I was excited to see you all dressed up as evacuees with your gas masks and suitcases. You say that you really enjoy these activities and I hope that many more of you will soon be able to work in this way. The teaching in your school is good and it means that, together with your positive attitudes to work, you make good progress and attain standards that are above the national average.

The adults are always looking at ways to improve your learning. To make it even better, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to write in lots of different and exciting ways as you tell me you enjoy this very much. I am also going to ask them to give you more opportunities to work out for yourselves how well you are doing so. This will help you find out how to make your work even better than it already is.

I am sure that you are ready for this challenge! I know that you will continue to work hard and I am sure that you will help your teachers to make your school even better.

I hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector