

# St John's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115669
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312022
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Sadler

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sara Morris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Suzanne Gilbert
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	Albion Street Cheltenham GL52 2SN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 523786
<b>Fax number</b>	01242 228881

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 January 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	312022

---

© Crown copyright 2008

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 an Additional Inspector. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress of pupils in mathematics in Years 3 to 6; the impact of teaching and the curriculum on the progress of pupils at an early stage of learning English; and the strengths that contribute to the inclusiveness of the school. Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising documents and pupils' work, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not evaluated 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 this report.

## Description of the school

The school is of below average size and is situated near the town centre. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. Increasingly, these pupils are of eastern European ethnicity. The proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English is also above average.

## 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 where pupils achieve well. The greatest strength of the school is the way in which pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds are welcomed and included in the life of the school. Pupils, parents and staff rightly find this cultural richness a cause for celebration. A comment that the school is 'particularly strong in encouraging good values of caring for others and respecting difference' reflects the views of many parents. Pupils who start school with little knowledge of English make excellent progress in learning the language and, by the time they leave, attain standards that are in line with those of other pupils.

Children start school with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected. They make good progress in the Reception class and attain the goals set for children of their age. In Years 1 to 6 pupils make very good progress in English and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. They make good progress in mathematics and science and attain at least average standards in these subjects. In 2007, the school was rightly disappointed with standards attained in mathematics tests. The reasons were analysed and effective action has been taken to raise attainment. Evidence of these successful strategies can be found in pupils' work. For instance, during the inspection Year 5 pupils were investigating 'triangular numbers'. They correctly identified a pattern linking these to square numbers. This was work of a high standard for their age.

The pupils' success is achieved through teaching of a consistently good standard. Teachers' expectations are very clear, leading to excellent behaviour and relationships in the classroom. Very good use is made of questioning and of pupils discussing their work with each other. Those at an early stage of learning English, or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive very good support. Excellent marking of work enables pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils are set challenging targets for the next steps in their learning and have a very good understanding of how to use these effectively. The curriculum is well planned and uses teachers' knowledge of pupils' progress to ensure that each child is given appropriately challenging work. There is a good range of additional activities such as trips and an after school club, but pupils rightly complain that out of school sporting activities are limited in some seasons. Good use is made of the range of languages in the school, with clubs for French, Polish and Chinese.

The school's inclusive ethos promotes excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is rooted in Christian values, but those of all faiths are respected and celebrated. Pupils use this diversity to make an outstanding contribution to the community, as when pupils performed Hindu dance to the pupils of a nearby infant school. They also have a good understanding of what makes a school a better place. Pupils in a Year 4 class, for example, engaged in an intelligent discussion about children's rights and responsibilities. Such activities contribute to pupils' excellent enjoyment of school. To quote a pupil representing the views of many, 'I really enjoy learning and playing with my friends.' Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe, for example when walking or cycling in their urban environment. Their knowledge of how to lead healthy lives is good, although they admit to eating chocolate and crisps at school, as healthy alternatives are not always available. Pupils' attendance has improved in recent years and is now above average.

The school is a happy place for pupils and staff, and the consistency arising from low staff turnover is greatly appreciated by parents. Leaders and managers are experienced, well trained and effective. They have a very good understanding of how to meet the needs of the pupils,

especially those at an early stage of learning English or with particular learning needs. Pupils receive excellent care, with robust child protection procedures and with staff having a very good knowledge of all pupils. As a parent said, 'St John's is like a village school in the middle of town.' There are excellent links with external partners including agencies and other educational establishments. The experience of the staff is recognised locally, for instance through their involvement in research on assessment, published by the local authority. The headteacher and other leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set challenging targets that are usually achieved. Governors support the school well and ensure that leaders and managers are accountable. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school is in a good position to make further improvements and achieve the leaders' goal of overall excellence.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

On starting school, children have a very wide range of social and communication skills. Routines are quickly established, and children experience a wide range of activities that enable them to make good progress. Those with limited English very quickly acquire fluency in the language. Staff assess pupils' development effectively, through observation and careful recording. This enables work to be planned to meet their individual needs. Activities encourage independence and social interaction. A recently completed covered outdoor area successfully extends these opportunities. Although teaching is good, on a few occasions children are required to concentrate for too long on one activity, and they become restless as a result.

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

- Improve the range of healthy eating options available to pupils.
- Ensure that a range of additional sporting and other physical activities is available to pupils throughout the year.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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?	1
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	2
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	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

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?	1

<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

05 February 2008

Dear Pupils

St John's CE Primary School, Cheltenham GL52 2SN

I very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed talking to the school council and others of you, as I found you confident, friendly and able to express your views very clearly.

I agree with you and your parents that yours is a good school. These are some of the most important things about it.

- You make good progress, and pupils in Year 6 get above average results in tests and assessments, especially in English.
- Everyone gets on very well together and you all learn a lot from friends from different cultures and faiths. You use this to help the community, such as when the Hindu dance club performed for the infant school.
- Those of you who did not speak much English when you started at the school make excellent progress in learning the language.
- The school is working hard to improve your mathematics and you are now producing some very good work in this area.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting and fun. You find the way teachers mark your work very helpful.
- You have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and of how to keep safe.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You enjoy school a lot, especially all the different activities on offer. There are lots of clubs, although you told me you would like more sports clubs.
- Teachers set you useful targets, and you understand how to use these very well.
- You are cared for very well.
- The headteacher, other staff and governors lead the school well.
- The school has excellent links with other schools and with your parents.

I have asked the school to improve two things. I have asked that the school provides you with more healthy food, and that you have more opportunities for sport and exercise out of school time.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler Lead inspector

05 February 2008

Dear Pupils

**St John's CE Primary School, Cheltenham GL52 2SN**

I very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed talking to the school council and others of you, as I found you confident, friendly and able to express your views very clearly.

I agree with you and your parents that yours is a good school. These are some of the most important things about it.

- You make good progress, and pupils in Year 6 get above average results in tests and assessments, especially in English.
- Everyone gets on very well together and you all learn a lot from friends from different cultures and faiths. You use this to help the community, such as when the Hindu dance club performed for the infant school.
- Those of you who did not speak much English when you started at the school make excellent progress in learning the language.
- The school is working hard to improve your mathematics and you are now producing some very good work in this area.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting and fun. You find the way teachers mark your work very helpful.
- You have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and of how to keep safe.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You enjoy school a lot, especially all the different activities on offer. There are lots of clubs, although you told me you would like more sports clubs.
- Teachers set you useful targets, and you understand how to use these very well.
- You are cared for very well.
- The headteacher, other staff and governors lead the school well.
- The school has excellent links with other schools and with your parents.

I have asked the school to improve two things. I have asked that the school provides you with more healthy food, and that you have more opportunities for sport and exercise out of school time.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler  
Lead inspector