

St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116297
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312248
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Sherwin
Headteacher	Mrs April Owen-Jones
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	Abshot Road Titchfield Common Fareham PO14 4NH
Telephone number	01489 573276
Fax number	01489 885710

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2008
Inspection number	312248

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils attending this average sized primary school are from White British backgrounds. The percentage from ethnic minorities is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is rising and is now above average. Most of this group have moderate learning and emotional and behavioural problems. The school is settling down after a period of staff change caused by illness and promotion. The school does not have a deputy headteacher and the headteacher has been in post for two years. The school holds the following quality marks: Advanced Healthy Schools, Investors in People and Activesports.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving well due to the clear direction of the headteacher. She has created a good staff team who are working well together and this is already having a positive impact on standards and achievement, the school environment and the good response of pupils. Pupils are pleased that, 'pupils' voices are always taken into account when making decisions'. Parents are mainly pleased with what the school provides. As one parent noted, 'the future of St John's looks good'.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children start school with skills that are broadly average overall. They make sound progress across most areas of learning to meet the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1. They make good progress in their personal and social skills because they are well cared for and relationships are good. However, there is not enough effective adult support for activities the children choose themselves. This means that opportunities to develop their language and other skills are missed and so they sometimes lose interest too.

Standards are average and pupils make satisfactory progress across the school. This is a significant improvement at Key Stage 2 where, until recently, there has been underachievement in science and writing. The improvement is due to effective interventions by the school and good support from the local authority. However, although vocabulary and content have improved in writing, there is not enough emphasis on correct spelling, punctuation and presentation, which still hinders progress. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan and organise lessons well and provide good opportunities for collaborative work and practical activities. Pupils particularly enjoy the increased opportunities for investigative work in science. As a result, they work hard and find learning fun. The main weaknesses in teaching are a lack of challenge in questioning which inhibits the development of pupils' thinking skills and the lack of constructive marking to help pupils improve.

Pupils enjoy school. They appreciate the responsibilities they have such as being buddies and providing games for pupils to enjoy at lunchtimes or being part of the school council and helping to make the school a better place for all pupils. The curriculum ensures continuity in learning for pupils within the mixed-age classes. Good enrichment such as lunchtime clubs, including sports coaching, contributes well to pupils' personal development. Good pastoral care enables pupils to feel safe and well cared for. The school provides well for its vulnerable pupils providing effective support for those with low self-esteem and a nurture unit and time-out room for those with emotional and behavioural problems. Effective tracking and regular assessments have helped the school to bring about good improvement in pupils' achievement. All pupils have targets for English, mathematics and science but their use is inconsistent across the school thus lessening their impact. The new senior leadership team are committed to supporting the headteacher in continuing improvement and are enthusiastic about the challenges involved. Monitoring of teaching has led to improvement in its quality. However, there is a need for a clearer set of criteria so that all staff know the steps needed to improve teaching further. The school is settling down well after a period of change. The headteacher has brought about many improvements to the school, including improved achievement. Now with a motivated senior leadership team in place and clear plans for further improvement, the school has a sound capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Effective teamwork and good relationships enable children to gain confidence and settle well. Teaching is satisfactory and provides a good balance between teacher-led activities and those chosen by children. This is enabling children to develop independence in their learning. However, teachers miss opportunities to extend and support children's learning through appropriate interventions and this hampers progress. A new programme to help children link sounds to letters was introduced this year. It is beginning to have a positive impact on children's understanding of letters and sounds.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by applying more rigorous criteria to monitoring its effectiveness, ensuring marking is used to improve pupils' work and questioning by teachers is more challenging.
- Improve standards in writing further by ensuring pupils punctuate, spell and present their work more accurately.
- In the Foundation Stage, ensure adults extend and support child-initiated activities in order to promote children's skills more effectively.

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

In 2007, there was a good improvement in standards in the national assessments at the end of Year 2. They rose from below average in 2006 to be broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils made satisfactory progress based on their prior attainment. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making satisfactory progress although there is a slight decline in standards overall. This is due to the high number of pupils with learning difficulties in this year group.

At Key Stage 2, there has been a declining picture in terms of standards over several years, particularly in English and science. Pupils' achievement in these subjects has been unsatisfactory. In the national tests in 2007, there was a significant improvement in pupils' achievement in mathematics. This year the school's monitoring of pupils' progress shows that the current Year 6 are on track to attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' overall achievement, given their starting points, is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The caring and supportive atmosphere of the school helps pupils to gain confidence and enables them to become more mature and independent. Links with a church school in Ghana helps pupils develop a good understanding of different cultures. Pupils enjoy school, say behaviour is now good and lunch and break times are more fun. Pupils know how to keep safe, are confident of adult support should they have any worries and do not consider bullying to be a problem. They have a good understanding of a healthy diet and the importance of

exercise and enjoy participating in physical activities that aid fund raising such as 'Jump for Heart'. Pupils welcome the many opportunities they have to contribute to the community. Their sound basic skills together with the good opportunities they have to develop enterprise skills prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers provide work at different levels for pupils within the mixed age-classes but overall they do not develop pupils' thinking skills sufficiently through effective questioning or extension activities, thus slowing progress. Teachers are working hard to improve pupils' use of description in their writing. This was particularly noticeable in a good lesson in a Year3/4 class where pupils were using imaginative vocabulary and alliteration in their persuasive writing. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning through their support for small groups and individuals. with reading and writing difficulties. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. It does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work or ensure it happens.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The newly revised curriculum focuses appropriately on project work. Some good links between different subjects were seen, such as the work on India linking humanities, English and information and communication technology (ICT). Nonetheless, the school acknowledges that this needs further development in order to extend pupils' thinking and creative skills. The specific foci on aspects of literacy, numeracy and science have helped the school to raise standards in these areas. Provision for music is strong with specialist music teaching, work with a music teacher from the secondary school and involvement in music festivals. ICT provision has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the use of laptops in Key Stage 2. The focused work for pupils with specific language and mathematical problems is enabling them to make good progress towards their targets. A good range of extra activities such as French lessons and residential visits develops a range of skills. Pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy is reinforced through personal, social and health education and the healthy eating and sports programmes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are thorough; pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to ensure vulnerable pupils are well supported; this includes special provision for pupils in danger of exclusion. Pupils have targets for their learning, which are regularly up-dated. However, although there is some evidence of pupils evaluating their targets, this is not yet consistent throughout the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new leadership team have a clear and shared sense of direction and along with subject leaders are developing their role in school improvement. They are aware, however, that there is still some way to go. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and improving. The school improvement plan, agreed by all, guides all initiatives and is a useful tool. However, some success criteria are not concise enough to clearly measure the impact of initiatives. Monitoring of teaching and learning has mainly involved local authority staff and the headteacher using varied criteria and this has led to improvements in teaching. However, there is a need for a more rigorous, formalised set of criteria to ensure all staff are clear about exactly what makes an effective lesson.

Governors are developing a good knowledge of the school and enjoy their increased involvement in the process of school development, which is enabling them to have a clearer view of the school and its priorities. The school involves parents well through, for example, its parents' forum, pupils' homework and its active parents' association. A small number of parents have concerns about aspects of behaviour but inspectors found that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

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.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School, Fareham, PO14 4NH

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming and helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed talking to the school council and Year 6 pupils and were delighted to learn how much you enjoy school and all the opportunities it offers.

We think that St John's is a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are the things we like about your school.

- Your new headteacher and all the staff are working hard to ensure you make better progress.
- You enjoy school, work hard and find learning fun.
- You are well cared for and given many responsibilities, which you enjoy.
- You are pleased that your views are listened to and taken into account.

These are the things we think your school could do better.

- Improve teaching even more by monitoring it carefully, improving marking of your work and ensuring that questioning makes you think.
- Improve your skills in writing by ensuring you use punctuation better, spell correctly and write neatly.
- In the Foundation Stage, we have asked adults to make sure all activities challenge you and develop your skills.

You can help by making sure you work hard and do your best.

Thank you once again for being such helpful and friendly pupils.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector