

St John's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122744
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	314382
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Bassford
Headteacher	Mrs V G Stone
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	80 Nottingham Road Stapleford Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG9 8AQ
Telephone number	01159 177111
Fax number	01159 177111

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school, housed in a Grade 2 listed Victorian building. It serves children from neighbouring areas as well as the immediate locality. Their attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is generally broadly in line with that expected. A higher percentage of pupils than nationally have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or a statement of special educational need. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. A higher than expected number join and leave the school at other than expected times. The school does not have a hall and some rooms have dual use. It has the use of local facilities for physical education (PE) and for events such as drama productions. The school holds Investors in People status. It achieved Artsmark Gold in 2006 and has recently attained the National 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 and improving school. The Christian values on which the school bases its work shine through the day and promote pupils' outstanding personal development. Parents speak glowingly of St John's, which, in the words of one, 'challenges, encourages, nurtures and values all of the children.' Care, guidance and support and the curriculum are also outstanding aspects, due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher. Her vision and effective monitoring of the school's work translate into actions that ensure every child can achieve well. Effective subject coordinators and governors result in good overall leadership and management of the school.

Pupils achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6. Results vary from year to year due to the composition of the small year groups and the above average proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through this stage of education. However, all pupils make good progress from the Foundation Stage. The school is successfully addressing writing issues, which were an issue at the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils are achieving well because the quality of teaching is good. Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, teachers' good knowledge of their subjects and an abundance of interesting tasks encourage pupils' good progress and enthusiasm for learning. Pupils have a clear focus in lessons because the purpose of learning is very clear. However, there is some inconsistency in the level of challenge offered to pupils, which means that pupils of all abilities do not always make the progress that they could. Also, marking, whilst telling pupils what they have achieved, does not regularly tell them how to move forward in their learning. The development of information and communications technology (ICT) since the last inspection has allowed pupils to improve their independent learning skills.

Pupils are happy in school because there is always something new to learn and in which to get involved. Their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strengthened by the excellent curriculum. Learning is enlivened extremely well by themed weeks, visits and extra-curricular activities which encourage learning in its broadest sense. This leads to skills being developed that prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education. Regular and planned opportunities for pupils to appreciate the cultural diversity of the world in which we live ensure an excellent understanding and empathy of the beliefs and lifestyles of others. The staff are really good role models. The high expectations they have of pupils, and the careful and thorough arrangements for keeping them healthy and safe result in pupils feeling very secure. All pupils are included in school life well and the ways that their social development are provided for confirms the school's outstanding care, guidance and support of all pupils. In particular, teaching assistants and teachers provide very high quality and specific support so that pupils who find learning difficult make good progress.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are delighted with the good provision, which allows them to learn in many different ways, indoors and outdoors. From day one, they are encouraged to develop independent skills within a very secure environment. In learning by discovery, and by creative approaches to learning, a sense of awe and wonder is tangible. Much is expected of the children and they respond happily, behaving well and treating each other kindly. The Foundation Stage is managed well. The teacher knows the levels at which each child works and monitors progress regularly to ensure good challenge to learning. Regular liaison with parents strengthens the work of the

school, helping parents to support their child's learning. Teaching is good, enabling good progress, and hence many children attain their early learning goals.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that tasks meet closely the levels at which pupils are working, to help them to make as much progress as possible.
- Ensure that marking tells pupils how to move forward in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils consolidate their learning in the Foundation Stage through Key Stages 1 and 2 so that standards are above average by the end of Year 6. In 2007, every pupil achieved expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Standards in national tests vary from year to year, depending on the size of each year group and the significant proportion of pupils who join or leave part way through the taught year. All pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make good progress from their variable starting points because of good teaching and exceptional support and guidance. Year 2 teacher assessments in 2007 showed that pupils' achievements were in line with national expectations in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Improving writing standards are working through the school. The school's data points to a similar picture this year. Key Stage 2 predictions indicate above average results in English and mathematics and all pupils likely to achieve expected levels in science. Challenging targets are being set through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils respond very enthusiastically to the many opportunities to develop lifelong skills, which result in them being well prepared for the next stage of their education. In particular, enterprise activities capture pupils' imaginations and enable them to practise working independently and in teams, as well as developing leadership qualities. Pupils are very happy, busy and secure here, showing eagerness to help out and to take responsibility for improving their school. The Christian ethos of the school promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reflected strongly in the positive relationships that pupils have with their peers and staff and in their good behaviour, above average attendance, kindness and consideration towards each other. Rare instances of bullying are dealt with promptly. The school council provides a genuine voice for school improvement, as in the change to the 'cook and serve' kitchen, which enables pupils' excellent understanding of healthy eating to be put into practice. Pupils have ample and fun opportunities to keep fit and healthy through 'active lunchtimes' and speak confidently about how to stay safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Bright displays of work in every classroom and in corridors provide a great environment for learning. Teachers know their subjects well. Planning is good and lessons have a clear purpose, which is shared with pupils and revisited during lessons. Tasks are interesting and varied but they do not always match closely enough the levels at which pupils are working to ensure that

they make progress as quickly as they could. Computer based learning is proving effective as an enjoyable and alternative way of developing and practising new skills. Marking of work does not regularly tell pupils what they need to do to improve although it states their successes very clearly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils of all abilities are making good progress because the curriculum is planned particularly well. Provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties is excellent. The key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are increasingly developed through very creative activities that build on pupils' own life experiences and promote real enjoyment. Outstanding enterprise activities promote their excellent personal development. A day's reflection at a local place of worship demonstrates the school's commitment to developing pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and PE, which are also part of a wide programme of extra-curricular activities. The school has surmounted accommodation issues in PE by using the gym facilities of a nearby school and by developing very profitable partnerships with other organisations. Spanish is an exciting addition to the curriculum through the school and is also part of other subjects. Learning is enhanced by fantastic initiatives, with pupils' work, for example, being displayed in a London gallery and other summer projects that underline the school's creative curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils feel safe in school because staff care for them exceptionally well. Thorough procedures are in place to protect them and keep them safe. The focus on promoting their social, emotional and academic development is strengthened by excellent partnerships with outside agencies, with parents and by the family feel of the school. Thorough preparation for pupils moving on to secondary school ensures that they look forward to new challenges.

Pupils who find learning difficult are supported outstandingly by skilled and committed teaching assistants. Those pupils with particular gifts and talents are directed towards, and supported in, activities that promote their abilities very well. All pupils know their targets in reading, writing and mathematics and their progress is monitored thoroughly. Pupils are benefiting from being able to take more ownership of their learning by assessing their work more regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and is greatly respected by staff and parents. Her vision and direction are supported by careful planning, which focuses successfully on improving achievement and celebrating the uniqueness and value of every pupil. She has a good understanding of the school's performance because of regular monitoring of its work. Governors also take responsibility for this role, and are increasingly effective because of it. Curriculum initiatives, such as the development of ICT and a relevant programme of professional development for staff, demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. This is strengthened by the commitment and teamwork of subject coordinators in moving the school forward, which leads to pupils making good progress in their 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?	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 ¹ 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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 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

9 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's Church of England Primary School, Stapleford, NG9 8AQ

I am writing to tell you what I found out about your school when I visited you recently. First, I want to thank you for making me welcome and for making my two days with you very enjoyable. Thank you, also, to those of you who gave up part of your lunch time to tell me all about your school.

Your school is a good school. You are making good progress here, from the time you are in the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6. The standards that you reach are above average. This is because you are taught well and have targets to work towards. Your headteacher's leadership is outstanding. She with the support of other staff, is going to help you to do even better by checking that the work you are given is just right for the levels at which you are working. Teachers mark your books often and tell you what you have done well. I have asked them also to write in your books what you need to do to move further on in your learning. A number of you sometimes find learning difficult and the help that you are given is excellent.

You are happy here and feel safe and extremely well cared for by the staff. You enjoy lessons, which the teachers work hard to make interesting. You now have much better ICT resources to help you to learn. It is pleasing to see that you learn a lot of skills through taking on school responsibilities and enterprise activities. The school council is making a difference and showing that pupils have a real say in improving the school. Lunches, for example, are much better and are helping you in your desire to keep fit. Some of you told me how much you enjoy the clubs, visits and residential activities that help you to develop new skills.

I wish you well for the future and hope that you will continue to work hard and follow the advice of your teachers.

Mrs Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector