

St John's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122787
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	314401
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2008
Reporting inspector	John Foster

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	137
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Drake
Headteacher	Mr Chris Belton (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Vale Road Colwick Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG4 2ED
Telephone number	01159115599
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average, with a small number of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The headteacher left to take up another appointment at the end of last term and the deputy headteacher has been appointed as acting headteacher for the next two terms. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds with English as their first language, though this is not the case for a small number of pupils. When they start school, children's attainment is slightly below that expected for their age. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also a little above average though there are no pupils requiring a statement of special educational need. The school has gained the Healthy Schools' Gold Award, the Bronze EcoSchools' Award and the Activemark Award for physical education and games.

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, a judgement closely matching the school's own evaluation. Leadership and management are good and the school's attention to providing equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their difficulties and/or disabilities, is excellent. Though only in post since the beginning of the current term, the acting headteacher has already made a positive impact on the school and its work and is building well on its previous successes. A new school improvement plan has been devised which is a good vehicle to move the school forward. Whilst the monitoring of teaching has not been as rigorous during recent months as in the past, a programme has been organised to check more effectively the quality of pupils' learning. The arrangements for checking on pupils' progress are good. However, the school recognises that greater consolidation of its assessment and tracking procedures and the use of electronic analysis of data will help the staff to plan even more effectively to help raise pupils' achievement. The governing body gives the school its full support and governors are well aware of its strengths and what needs to be done to improve it further. There is a strong ethos within the school to give the children the best start possible in their education.

Children make good progress in EYFS so that most reach the expected levels in all areas of their learning by the time they start in Key Stage 1. In this key stage, they are taught well and by the end of Year 2 standards are just above average. Standards, though variable year-by-year because of the small number of pupils in each year group, are above average overall at the end of Key Stage 2. The progress pupils make is good overall and, in 2007, the improvement made by Year 6 pupils in Key Stage 2, placed the school in the top one per cent of schools nationally. The main reason for the good achievement made by pupils is the good teaching they receive. Teachers' planning is particularly effective in ensuring that the pupils have relevant learning opportunities. The mutual respect between the staff and the pupils results in good behaviour in lessons and the children trying their hardest to please the teachers.

There are good levels of care and support for the pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and can discuss any problems they may have with staff, knowing that they will be readily resolved. Academic guidance is good. Pupils have individual targets, set in discussion with their teachers. They are helped to reach these targets because the teachers mark work carefully, giving clear guidance so that pupils know how they can improve their work. Pupils' personal development is good. They are aware of the need to live healthy lifestyles through taking regular exercise and eating healthy food. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's curriculum is well designed and implemented to ensure that these areas are catered for well. The school has devised a new programme for learning based on the development of skills, rather than solely the acquisition of knowledge. Though at an early stage of development and not fully embedded in practice, the curriculum has got off to a good start and is making effective links between subjects which aids learning. There are good links with the community through, for example, the parish church and when the local residents are invited to school events. The school council, though composed of pupils in Key Stage 2 only, has a good impact on the school through its work. The daily 'Wake and Shake' early morning sessions encourage pupils to be at school on time, and this has resulted in improving the attendance rates to significantly above those found nationally.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children first come into school part-time, they have skills which are slightly below what is normally expected for their age. Due to the careful planning of activities and the support from staff they make good progress and most achieve the expected level by the time they are ready to go into Year 1, and some children exceed this. Children's progress and their needs are carefully noted and the information used well to judge what they are to learn next, based on what they already know and can do. The level of care and expectations for behaviour are high, which means the children are settled and secure, especially as they know the daily routines and their attitudes to each other are generally positive. Leadership and management provide a clear view of what needs to be done to embed the EYFS in daily practice, including the increased use of the outdoor area and improved quality of its facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop fully the procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Consolidate the procedures for tracking pupils' progress and use the information gained to improve further the quality of learning.
- Implement the new curricular plans fully to ensure that the curriculum is completely relevant to the pupil's and children's needs, including the enhanced provision of the outdoor area for children in the EYFS.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From the time they start in EYFS pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. The result of this is that by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. The data for the national tests in 2007 show that the Year 6 pupils had made such exceptional progress that they were in the top one per cent of schools nationally. The results for 2008 give a positive picture with the school having exceeded its targets in mathematics, English and science, both at the expected National Curriculum Level 4 and for the higher Level 5. All groups of children make good progress, including those who find learning difficult.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school has successfully raised attendance to excellent levels through activities such as 'Wake and Shake', which has also improved punctuality. Pupils explain clearly how exercise helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle, have a good choice of healthy eating options, and are clear about what is the best course of action to keep themselves safe. They enjoy their time in school. Behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary. Relationships are secure, allowing pupils to approach adults if they have any concerns or worries. Pupils are given many opportunities to be active in promoting the life of the school, for example, as playground buddies or members of the school council. However, the school council is composed of pupils in Key Stage 2 and does not give opportunities for younger pupils to have a say in its activities. Skills towards supporting pupils' future well-being are developing well and the ethos of the school promotes a positive working environment. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and the 'Big Write' sessions are used well to create a sense of spirituality. However,

pupils are not as aware as they could be about the rich multi-cultural mix found throughout Britain.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teachers' planning for learning is excellent. This results in the pupils being taught well, enabling them to make good progress in their learning. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, resulting in behaviour in lessons that is consistently good. This means that little time is wasted and pupils are expected to work consistently to produce their best. The staff set challenging targets for their pupils and the good relationships that exist between pupils and adults means that pupils, in their turn, work hard to please their teachers. Whilst the pace of teaching is generally appropriate for the pupils' needs, at times teachers attempt to push learning on at too fast a speed, so that not all pupils keep up with what they are learning. Pupils who find learning difficult receive good support and improve their learning at a similar rate to other groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum to support pupils' learning, including a good range of activities beyond the normal school day. Having recently undertaken a review of the curriculum, the school has introduced new policies based on developing children's skills in addition to their knowledge. Whilst at an early stage of development, the school is aware that this needs further consolidation in its practice. Plans are clearly in place to enable this to happen. A particularly good example of this are the links the school has established with the National Gallery. All children from the school went to the National Gallery to see the paintings on display. Using the Gallery's programme, 'Take One Picture', the school used one of the Gallery's prints as a starting point on which to base a wide range of learning activities. This has been a particularly successful initiative. The curriculum is enhanced well by the good range of out-of-school clubs and by visits and visitors to school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The caring ethos means that the needs of all pupils are met because the school goes the 'extra mile' to ensure individuals are catered for and the whole of the school community supports those who have any particular difficulties. There are clear procedures to ensure well-being and safety are supported, and the partnership with parents and carers is valued. For example, being involved in the process of settling children when they first come to school or attending 'family assemblies'. Due to the good levels of support and the careful planning of the provision, pupils, including those identified as finding learning difficult, make good progress alongside their peers. Work is marked regularly and provides clear guidance for pupils on what they need to do to improve and what they should learn next. However, this is variable, with better quality marking evident in English than in other subjects. The pupils are aware of the targets they have for their learning and explain these clearly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The acting headteacher has already had a positive impact on the school. In this, the staff, the governors and the local authority have supported him well. A new school improvement plan has been produced and the school's self-evaluation processes have been updated. The school is well set for future development. The headteacher has been successful in rapidly moulding the staff as an effective team. Subject leadership is good. The coordinators know their subjects well and have clear plans for developing them. The headteacher and governors monitor the school's performance well, though the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sufficiently rigorous. A programme to improve this area of the school's performance is in place, though currently only limited monitoring has taken place. The school provides excellent equal and inclusive opportunities for all pupils, whatever their disabilities or learning difficulties. The school provides well for encouraging community cohesion within the school and surrounding area. Governance is good. Well led by the chair, governors monitor the school's performance well. They visit the school regularly and readily identify the strengths of the school and areas for development. The impact of the headteacher's work, the support of the staff and effectiveness of the governing body place the school in a good position 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

29 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St John's CofE Primary School, Colwick, NG4 2ED

This letter is to thank you for the welcome you gave Mrs King and I when we came to inspect your school recently. I would like to thank you for helping us with our work and to tell you what we found out about your school.

You told us that you were happy in school and that the staff care for you well. You are taught well and this helps you to make good progress in your learning. Your behaviour is good, you are enthusiastic and you get on well together. Because of these factors, you are able to reach above average standards. You told us that if you have a problem at school you can readily go to a member of staff and they will help you.

You know about healthy living and many of you told me that you enjoy your healthy dinners at school. The staff organise many activities out of school for you, particularly so you can take part in sporting activities.

In order to make the school even better, we have asked Mr Belton, the staff and governors to:

- make regular checks to ensure that you continue to be taught well
- check your progress regularly and use the information they have to make sure that the teachers plan work to help you to make even more progress in your learning
- make sure that the activities that are planned make effective links between subjects and to develop the curriculum for the youngest children.

With best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

John Foster

Lead inspector