

# St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124355
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314901
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barbara Crane

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	155
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anne Allcock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Butters
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	The Avenue Kidsgrove Stoke-on-Trent ST7 1AE

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	314901

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<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement in mathematics; the quality of provision, especially in relation to the achievement of more able pupils; and the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from observing lessons, looking at pupils' work, performance data, parents' questionnaires and the school's documentation, as well as from discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

This smaller than average Catholic primary school draws its pupils from a wide area in which some families face challenging circumstances. There are more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at this school than at most schools. A few pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. The school is split between two sites that are a mile apart. The school's governors manage a nursery unit that caters for children aged three to five years of age. Nearly all of the children attending this provision transfer to the school's Reception class. The Nursery unit and the Reception class form the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition, the school offers before- and after-school care facilities, including a breakfast club.

## 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. Good leadership and management make sure that pupils are well prepared for their future lives. This is achieved through securing pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their positive attitudes to learning and good progress in their work. The staff are enthusiastic about working at the school and the pupils are proud to belong to it. Pupils say how secure they feel and how much they like and respect all of the staff. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school provides for their children. Pupils receive good advice from staff when they need it and the school is part of a Community Learning Partnership that provides effective support for vulnerable families.

There is good teaching, right from children's earliest experiences of school. Lessons are well prepared and managed and pupils know exactly what they should be doing. Learning is mostly challenging, although there are a few times when teachers do not expect enough from more able pupils. Good assessment means that the staff take swift and effective steps to support any pupils who are falling behind and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is skilled and precise support by teaching assistants who are a valued part of the teaching team. The needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are carefully considered and met, so that they make good progress.

From a well below average point when they start, pupils reach average standards by the time they leave. Within this picture of good achievement, the high spot is English. Pupils are particularly confident in speaking and listening, and writing. They write very competently in different subjects, adapting the style to reflect the purpose with ease. This reflects the school's focus on writing in recent years and standards have risen. The school is now rightly focusing on improving pupils' progress in mathematics. Progress here is not quite as consistent as in English. This is because teaching does not always ensure that pupils acquire a range of effective strategies to solve problems in mathematics. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge sufficiently in everyday, practical situations.

A high priority is given by the staff to supporting pupils in growing up as well balanced and confident individuals who think before they act. Pupils' excellent enjoyment of school reflects in the positive relationships seen everywhere and in their good attendance. One pupil voiced the view of many in saying that 'It's really easy to make friends here because everyone is welcoming.' Pupils make a good contribution to the community and readily take on responsibilities. They have a strong influence over what happens in school and are quick to use their initiative. A group of Year 6 pupils, for example, has set out on a mission to improve a cloakroom area. They have put together design proposals, researched local businesses to resource the project and costed the venture. The computer presentation of their ideas impressed the governors and the project will go ahead. Pupils' awareness of the diverse cultures beyond their locality is continuing to develop.

Pupils put into practice what they have learned through the school's well planned programme of personal, social and health education. They behave well and have a good understanding of how to stay fit and keep healthy and safe. There is a good take-up of the wide range of extra activities that support the good curriculum. Older pupils, for example, have just returned from a residential visit. They talked enthusiastically to inspectors about the 'tough challenges' presented in outdoor activities and were proud that they were able to rise to these occasions with the support and encouragement of their friends. Good care for pupils is seen in all aspects

of the school's provision. The breakfast club, for example, provides a calm, relaxed atmosphere in which pupils enjoy a nutritious meal to start the day. There are plenty of chances for pupils to socialise and talk to both adults and children. The safeguarding of pupils is secure.

The headteacher provides a clear lead for the school that is closely focused on getting the best out of the pupils and staff. Other leaders and managers are growing in confidence in monitoring and evaluating the school's provision through good professional development. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and of those areas that could be even better. The school's promotion of cohesion within the community is good. Governors are supportive and play an active role with the headteacher and staff in checking that planned improvements are being brought about. The school has good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Due to good provision, children make good progress over their time in the Nursery and Reception Years. They start in the Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge that are well below expectations for their age. Their good achievement means that they are working within the early learning goals in all areas of learning and reach broadly average standards by the start of Year 1. Nursery children easily part from parents or carers because of the welcoming atmosphere. Reception children get down to activities quickly and help each other readily. Good attention is given to children's welfare. The flow of information between the staff and parents or carers supports children's sense of well-being. Good leadership and management, together with good teaching, ensure that children's abilities are well developed in all areas. A strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills means that children grow in confidence, share and work co-operatively, for example in the role-play area in Reception. They become confident and independent through activities such as self-registration and quickly tidy up when music plays to tell them that it is time to do so. Teaching very effectively uses questioning to extend children's speaking and understanding. Good and frequent assessment is well used to provide a picture of children's development that is shared regularly with parents. As in the rest of the school, there are a few times when opportunities are missed to really challenge children who can learn at a faster rate. There is a good curriculum that offers a wide range of stimulating activities indoors. Improvements to the facilities and access to the outdoor learning area are under way to allow for all six areas of learning to be fully represented in the outdoor learning area.

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

- Ensure teaching equips pupils with a wide range of strategies to solve problems in mathematics and to use their mathematical skills in practical everyday situations.
- Ensure teaching throughout the school provides a good level of challenge for more able pupils.

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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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<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 eliminated	2
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**

1 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 1AE

Thank you for welcoming Mrs Hughes and me when we spent the day at your school. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing how you love coming to school. Your parents are pleased that you go to St John the Evangelist and we could see why. It is a good school and a happy place that is giving you a good start to your education. This is what else we found out about your school.

- Nursery and reception children make a good beginning to learning, sharing and becoming independent.
- You work hard and do well in your work because you get good teaching from staff who enjoy what they are doing.
- You are really confident speakers and writers because your teachers aim high for you.
- You behave well and come to school regularly. It is good that you share your opinions with the staff about what needs to change for the better. This helps your school to improve.
- You have a good curriculum, with plenty of extra things to do like clubs and trips.
- You know how to keep yourselves and others safe. We were pleased to see you eating and drinking healthily and keeping fit by being active.
- The staff take good care of you and give you extra help and good advice.
- The people in charge know what is happening in the school and how they can make it even better for you. The staff have noticed that you are very good at English but not quite as good at mathematics. We have asked them to make sure that you try out lots of different ways of solving mathematical problems, including those that crop up outside mathematics lessons. There are just a few times when some of you who can go on a bit faster than others do not get the chance to do so. We have asked the school to ensure your teachers watch out for this and make sure that you get the challenge you need in lessons.

Keep trying your hardest and you will have bright futures.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Crane Lead inspector