

# St John The Baptist CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 126027          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | West Sussex     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 328444          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 11 June 2009    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Helen Hutchings |

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>   | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |   |
| School (total)   | 140   |
| 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>   | John Pope                                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Richard Yelland                               |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 7 June 2006                                   |
| <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>  | School Hill<br>Findon<br>Worthing<br>BN14 0TR |

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|--------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 4–11         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 11 June 2009 |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' achievement and standards
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the needs of all pupils
- the impact of care, guidance and support on pupils' personal development, well-being and academic achievement.

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

St John the Baptist is smaller than most other primary schools. The vast majority of pupils live within the village and its immediate surroundings. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class alongside some Year 1 pupils. Other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There is a current building programme to improve facilities and introduce a hot lunch option.

## 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 which has improved well since its last inspection. It now has several outstanding features, including pupils' personal development and well-being, the care, guidance and support adults provide for pupils and an exciting and relevant curriculum. Parents recognise the school's strengths and are overwhelmingly positive about the school, making comments such as, 'Life at St John the Baptist Primary School is extremely exciting with a large range of stimulating and interesting activities taking place' and 'We would like to take this opportunity to say what a wonderful school it is.' The headteacher and the senior leaders give an exceptionally clear lead in maintaining the school's family values and developing facilities so that 'everyone learns and works in a secure, encouraging and friendly environment', fulfilling the school's stated aim. The school places itself at the heart of the village community. Children develop an understanding of their role as young citizens very well through the contribution they make, for example, when younger pupils sing carols or when older pupils set up a 'litter pick' around the village.

The attainment of children on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage fluctuates significantly from year to year, being close to national expectations this year while last year it was well below. Children make good progress in their first year and this is maintained as pupils move up through the school. The school tracks the progress of pupils very closely, and staff use this information well to intervene if anyone begins to fall behind. Consequently, all groups of pupils, including those identified as having learning and/or disabilities, achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily since the last inspection and were significantly above average last year. Results in the Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science have been significantly above the national average for the last two years. Pupils in these year groups are again on track to achieve their challenging targets. Pupils achieve particularly well in developing their writing skills. Science, a relative weakness when the school was last inspected, is now broadly in line with standards in other subjects.

Adults are consistent in their dealings with pupils, ensuring that the school is exceptionally caring and inclusive. Adults know each of their pupils very well. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet requirements. Pupils have a strong sense of partnership in the school's development, for example through the work of the school council, and understand that this gives them increasingly wide opportunities. They enjoy school, know that they are listened to and are excellent ambassadors for their school. Their behaviour is first rate in lessons and around the school. Pupils are models for sensible living, and the school's excellent work on promoting healthy lifestyles has been recognised in recent Activemark, Healthy School and Eco School awards. The school swimming pool is a good facility and pupils thoroughly enjoy their participation in the very wide range of extra-curricular sports activities, doing well in competitive sport with other schools locally. Pupils' social and cultural development is promoted very well through clubs which match a broad range of interests, exciting visits and visitors directly related to curriculum topics, and a residential visit for older pupils. The school has reviewed its role in promoting community cohesion and an action plan is in place to build further on current good practice. Pupils are developing their understanding of cultural diversity nationally and in the wider world through an increasing range of contacts within Britain and links with schools abroad. Pupils' sense of responsibility for others is developed well through taking on positions as head boy or girl, or as acting as 'peace mediators' or 'playleaders'. This also develops pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and how to look after themselves.

Teachers use their expertise very effectively to make learning interesting and exciting, but not at the expense of ensuring that learning is challenging and that skills are developed systematically. Teaching and learning are good across the school, and sometimes outstanding. Pupils say that learning is 'fun'. In lessons, teachers make sure that pupils know exactly what they have to do because they explain things very clearly. They set work that meets the needs of different ability and age groups well. Information and communication technology is used well to enliven and illustrate learning. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and pupils find their targets and teachers' comments useful in helping them to know what needs to be improved. Teachers are enthusiastic about improving their practice further and recognise that assessment is not yet fully effective. Planning is in place to use national guidance to improve the way in which pupils are helped to understand exactly what they have to do to improve their work.

One of the key reasons for the improved standards since the last inspection is the school's imaginative and creative curriculum. This is exceptionally well planned to ensure that the curriculum is broad and links aspects of learning, for example, by providing real, relevant contexts for pupils to develop their writing skills. Teachers find practical ways to give pupils life skills which impact very well on their development, for example by growing fruit and vegetables and then cooking them in school. Pupils often work in pairs or small groups, and such approaches ensure that pupils develop personal skills alongside basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills which prepare them exceptionally well for their future education and working lives. Teachers use a rich range of resources in their lessons. For example, in one lesson, pupils produced high quality observational drawings of sunflowers because the teacher provided enough specimens for small groups to be able to look at them in detail.

The staff team is highly motivated, and teachers and teaching assistants work well as a close-knit team. Teachers plan the curriculum together so that they have a strong awareness of the development of pupils' skills and knowledge throughout the school. Senior leaders check school performance very frequently, for example observing teaching and learning assiduously and giving teachers helpful feedback about their performance. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Governors have sought the views of parents to guide strategic decision making and parents are kept well informed through a weekly school newsletter. The school's extremely accurate understanding of its own effectiveness and its track record of improving all aspects of the school, including pupils' achievements, since the last inspection gives it an outstanding capacity to build rapidly on recent successes.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The school ensures that children's welfare is a high priority and a close partnership is established with parents and children before children start school. This is extended well through the home-school contact book, mainly giving recognition to reading undertaken at home. Children feel secure and their personal development is outstanding, shown in the warm relationships they have with adults and in the happy, positive way they work and play alongside the older Year 1 pupils in the same class. They are enthusiastic about the things they do, for example choosing to write things for themselves or listening very attentively when reading a book with an older pupil. They have developed independence about their own learning and concentrate on their chosen activities for a long time, and enjoy talking about what they do, such as how they feel when they go swimming. They are very aware of their surroundings, pointing out how the new building is

coming on and what it will offer when completed. The outside area is used well as an outdoor classroom. There are good plans in place to provide more imaginative activities when the building programme is complete and it is no longer divided by a pathway used by older pupils. Children make good progress in all their areas of learning, although a few make slower progress in developing their early literacy and numeracy skills than in other areas. Leadership is good, and adults work well together as a team. Adults know children well individually and activities are accurately planned to meet their needs. For example, paired activities are encouraged for children whose listening skills need developing so that they learn to appreciate what others say. Most children are on course to meet, and some to exceed, the standards expected by the end of the academic year.

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

- Implement the plans to use national guidance to improve the way in which assessment is used to help pupils to understand exactly what they have to do to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

Grade: 2

## **Personal development and well-being**

Grade: 1

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

Grade: 2

### **Curriculum and other activities**

Grade: 1

### **Care, guidance and support**

Grade: 1

## **Leadership and management**

Grade: 2

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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 |
|---|----------------|

**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 capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1   |

**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? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 1 |
| 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   | 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 |

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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>                          | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education  | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

## 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? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 1 |

## 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 | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| 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**

12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Findon BN14 0TR

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing how you learn in lessons. This letter is to tell you about what we found out.

- You clearly enjoy school very much and this helps you to achieve well.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on extremely well with each other and with the adults in the school.
- You told us that adults are really helpful and that you feel safe in school.
- You work hard because you have such exciting things to do in lessons and you have a range of interesting trips and visitors to the school.
- Teachers give you good help to improve your work by making useful comments when they mark your work.
- You have a huge number of clubs to attend, and many of you represent the school well in sports competitions with other schools.
- You know that adults listen to how you think things can be improved, both in lessons and through the work of the school council.
- The headteacher and staff work well together and are always finding ways of improving facilities for you.

We have suggested that teachers try and find even better ways of showing you how to improve. You can help by making sure that you take their advice and try out their suggestions without having to be asked to do so.

Please thank your parents for returning the questionnaires. It was very helpful to hear what they had to say about the school. We wish everyone at 'St John the Baptist' well for the future.

Keep up the good work.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Helen Hutchings

Lead inspector