

St John's C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122748
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340207
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Williams

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 of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Neil Hogg
Headteacher	David White
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's development plan, assessments of pupils' progress, records of the school's monitoring activities, documents relating to safeguarding, health, safety and attendance and 57 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether pupils are making enough progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in English
- how well the school provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how well pupils respond to the school's potentially strong promotion of their personal development
- the extent to which pupils understand how they can improve their work
- how effectively the school's self-evaluation enables leaders to have an accurate view of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.

Information about the school

Almost all of the pupils at this larger than average primary school are from White British backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. An average proportion is eligible for free school meals. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage join the school in Reception at the beginning of either the autumn or spring terms. Amongst its nationally recognised awards, the school has the Healthy School Gold award and Sports Active Mark, and hosts a breakfast club that is managed by governors. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St John's C of E Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school is improving because the headteacher has given it a clear direction that is focused on raising standards and ensuring that pupils make at least the progress that is expected of them. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating and standards are considerably higher than they were in 2007. Nevertheless, the school leaders rightly recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. One of the school's key successes is to create a positive supportive ethos, in which pupils are keen to attend regularly, behave well and are ready and willing to learn. Good care is taken of them, and this is enhanced by strong links with a wide range of external services and agencies who offer specialist expertise. Systems to check on the suitability of adults to work with children are robust and the health, safety and welfare of pupils are monitored very thoroughly. As a result, pupils make good progress in their personal development and are unequivocal that they enjoy and feel safe in school.

National test results for pupils in Year 6 show that pupils' attainment has risen to broadly average levels from significantly below average in 2007. This is confirmed by the school's own assessments and pupils' current work and, when compared with pupils' starting points, this represents satisfactory progress. The leadership team has established appropriate systems to monitor the quality of pupils' work in lessons and their books. This is giving them an accurate view of what is working well and what needs to improve. Systems to track pupils' progress are improving because the school has recently introduced more regular assessment opportunities. This means that more up-to-date information on the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils is becoming available to staff. This information shows that more pupils are now making the progress expected of them, particularly in reading and writing, which has been the focus of much of the school's work. The proportion of pupils making good progress is also increasing, but is not yet sufficient to secure consistently good progress across the school. Leaders have rightly recognised that, because of their focus on English, pupils' progress in mathematics is in danger of slowing, and there are appropriate plans to deal with this.

Inconsistencies in teaching are being ironed out, and the proportion of good lessons is increasing. However, there is still variability in the way that teachers plan their lessons. In some cases, the learning objective (which identifies for pupils what they are expected to learn) is too broad, or focuses too much on what pupils will do, rather than what they will learn. There are examples, across the school, of pupils being given good quality feedback on their learning and what they need to do to improve, but this approach is

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not consistent from class to class or across subjects. In the main, pupils receive the support they need in lessons, although teachers' planning is not always sufficiently precise about how the learning will be modified for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Similarly the plans are not always clear enough about how more able pupils will be challenged.

The school has established strong links with parents, who are very supportive of its work, one commenting, 'I think the staff at St John's, from the cook, to the teaching assistants, the office staff and everyone else are professional and care about the children.' Staff and governors have a good understanding of what the school needs to do next. Their success in raising standards, accelerating pupils' progress and improving the care, guidance and support for pupils shows they are well placed to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics to match that found in English.
 - Increase the proportion of good teaching to secure consistently good progress by:
 - ensuring that lesson planning focuses precisely on what pupils are expected to learn
 - providing a more consistent approach to marking so that pupils are given clear feedback on their learning and how to improve.
 - Ensure that planning takes greater account of the needs of pupils of different ability, particularly more able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' attainment when they first start school covers a very broad range and varies from year to year but, taken overall, it is below that expected. Across the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils in Year 2 attained average levels of attainment in 2009, a good improvement on the significantly below average levels found the previous year. The school has worked successfully to accelerate pupils' progress. This is particularly the case in English, but is also reflected in the above average standards reached in science by Year 6 pupils in 2009. Pupils work hard in lessons and are invariably eager to learn. They make good progress where the teaching is good. The school recognises that there is more still to do to secure consistently good progress from class to class and across subjects. For example, progress is often good in Year 6, where the teaching is good. Similarly, the school's records show that pupils' progress was better in English than mathematics last year.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, although their learning slows when the lesson has not been modified for them sufficiently, or where they do not have the benefit of extra adult help. More able pupils are expected to achieve more than other pupils but, in many lessons, it is not clear how, precisely, they will be challenged to reach the higher levels of the national assessments of which they are capable. Nevertheless, pupils' satisfactory progress in the basic skills and their average attendance levels mean that they are appropriately prepared for their future lives.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly and pupils respond well. They are respectful of each other's views, listen intently when others speak and have a sound understanding of other cultures. They make good progress in their moral and social development, as shown by their good and, sometimes, excellent behaviour. They have a good understanding of how to be healthy and fit, which is a positive impact of the school's national awards in these areas. Opportunities to join the school council, or act as 'buddies', are examples of the many ways that pupils contribute to the school's smooth running.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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How effective is the provision?

Teachers have successfully created lessons that are consistently well organised, calm and smooth running. Relationships are invariably positive. Many pupils report their appreciation of teachers' hard work to make learning interesting and fun. Teachers make good use of interactive white boards to aid their explanations. At the beginning of lessons, staff ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to do, although they do not always focus enough on what they will learn. Teachers question well, keep a close check on pupils' understanding and deal sensitively with any misconceptions. Recent work to improve the setting of learning targets for pupils is already bearing fruit. These targets are well understood by most pupils, many of whom know the levels to which they aspire. In the best examples, the teacher's marking contributes well to this process, but this is not consistent.

Staff have successfully created a rich and interesting curriculum. They are, rightly, in the process of improving the links between subjects, to make the learning more meaningful and to exploit the richness of the curriculum to promote pupils' learning and progress. In particular, there is a need to ensure that the work more closely matches the needs of pupils of different abilities. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their interests outside lessons and through visits and visitors.

The pastoral care taken of pupils is a considerable strength and contributes to their enjoyment of school and their sense of safe-keeping. This is appreciated by parents and their children alike. Procedures to protect children are robust. The school is particularly vigilant about potentially vulnerable pupils, who are given the support they need to play a full part in school life. The welfare of pupils with special educational needs is monitored carefully, too, and there are close and supportive links with their parents. As a result, they make similar progress to their classmates, although this is best in lessons when their needs are more precisely met. Pupils enjoy their time in the breakfast club, and this is appreciated by parents. There are well thought-out systems to support children as they move from year to year and transfer to secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, staff are united in his ambition to raise standards. Learning team leaders - senior staff charged with monitoring and improving

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areas of the school for which they are responsible - are an emerging strength. Improving assessment arrangements are providing them with more detailed information about pupils' learning and how it can be improved. They are using this information increasingly well to secure the necessary improvement. There is still more to do, as they recognise, particularly to ensure there is enough good teaching to ensure pupils make consistently good progress. Staff evaluate their work conscientiously and are committed to sustaining improvement. Governors are supportive and have recently established procedures to put their monitoring of the school's work on a more formal footing. Senior staff track the progress and welfare of different groups of pupils carefully and they ensure that all groups, including vulnerable pupils, enjoy the same opportunities. Instances of bullying or harassment are very rare and are dealt with effectively. Rigorous steps are taken to safeguard pupils. Leaders have a good understanding of the impact of their work to promote community cohesion in the school and local area. This is less well developed further afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children clearly enjoy their learning. The range of skills they bring when they join Reception is widening increasingly, and this presents staff with a considerable challenge. Arrangements prior to children starting school are good. Every effort is made to gain information from each of the many settings from which children arrive, but there are sometimes gaps in what is known about each child. Staff compensate by carrying out detailed assessments from the time children start school. Children make satisfactory

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progress and most reach the goals expected of them. The school's records show that, in some years, children's progress is good. Staff are particularly successful at promoting children's personal development. They make good progress in this area, soon learning to share their ideas and equipment, and helping each other when playing in pairs or small groups. Relationships with adults are warm and supportive. All children are encouraged to participate, and there is a good balance between activities led by adults and those selected by children. Staff are strongly committed to promoting children's language and communication skills. For example, good teaching was seen when children were introduced to the shape and sound of the letter 'm'. Children contributed their own suggestions enthusiastically and then found objects that began with that letter. Staff were clear about what they wanted children to learn and they catered well for their different starting points, so they made good progress. Staff are less skilled in building on children's starting points in the free-choice activities so that, for example, there is not always enough guidance to help more able children extend their skills.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are positive about the school. In particular, they say that their children enjoy school and are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. Inspectors agree. Parents and carers feel that teaching is good. Inspectors found that, while there is good teaching across the school, this is not yet sufficiently consistent. A very small minority of parents and carers reported that the school does not help them to support their children's learning. Closer inspection reveals that the school has good systems to communicate and engage with parents and carers and good support is provided for them, for example, through its parental support advisor. A similarly small proportion of parents and carers feel that the needs of their children are not met sufficiently. Inspectors agree that there are occasions when the work does not match closely enough the needs of pupils of different abilities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's C of E Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspectors received 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	68	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	72	14	25	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	51	27	47	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	54	25	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	58	24	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	46	29	51	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	51	28	49	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	33	33	58	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	46	29	51	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	54	24	42	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	39	31	54	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	58	23	40	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	49	37	49	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's C of E Primary School, Worksop, S81 7LU

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. It was good to talk to you and you gave us lots of helpful information. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with us to give us your opinions. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that there are some things it does well and some things it could do better. Your headteacher and the other staff have been working hard to improve the school and things are getting better. Lots of you told us that you enjoy school and feel safe, and we agree. We were impressed with how well you behave and we could see that you are keen to learn. Please keep this up, because it is so important. Lots of you told us that your teachers make lessons interesting, and we are pleased with the clubs and visits that you have. You know about healthy eating and how to stay fit.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are keen for the school to continue to improve. We have asked them to do three things.

Your teachers have been working with you to improve your reading and writing. We want you to do just as well in mathematics.

We want your teachers to be really clear about what you are expected to learn in lessons and to make sure they give you enough information about how you can improve.

In some lessons, those of you who find learning easy could do harder work. We also want your teachers to make sure that those of you who need extra help get it.

We know you will want to help. Please keep doing your best, read your teachers' comments carefully and concentrate on what they ask you to improve. We wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams

Lead inspector

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