

St John's CofE Aided Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125184
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340737
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Kilpatrick
Headteacher	Angela Harper
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2007
School address	Barford Lane Farnham GU10 2JE
Telephone number	01428 713216
Fax number	01428 717659
Email address	headteacher@stjohn-farnham.surrey.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Nine lessons were observed and four teachers were seen. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities and with representatives of the governing body. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, inspectors examined 48 completed questionnaires from parents

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

- children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and their progress in Reception
- the evenness of pupils' progress in Key Stage 1, especially that of more capable pupils
- the consistency of good and better teaching across the school
- the impact of leadership and management at all levels on maintaining and improving upon the high quality provision seen at the previous inspection.

Information about the school

St John's is a small school which serves the local village and a wide surrounding area. Most pupils are White British. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and these pupils mainly have speech, language or literacy difficulties. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has gained a number of national awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark and International Schools Award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This school is outstanding. The academic performance of the pupils is exceptional in reading, writing, mathematics and science. A well-rounded education gives high priority to developing basic skills together with strong opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, sporting and practical talents. A key strength of the school is the outstanding quality of relationships and the degree of care and attention given to supporting each child. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence and self-worth and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their behaviour, is excellent. They contribute exceedingly well to the community in which the school is very much a part. Parents are delighted with their children's progress and, as one parent says, 'St John's is an excellent school and provides a fantastic foundation for school life.'

Staff have high expectations and prepare pupils extremely well for their future learning and life ahead. Pupils achieve exceptionally well as they move through the school. Those joining the Reception class usually have above average attainment and, by the time they begin Year 1, they reach well above average standards. This excellent rate of progress continues through the rest of the school and, by Year 2, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high. The school has consistently maintained these standards for the last five years.

The headteacher's outstanding leadership is central to ensuring that there is a constant focus on high achievement within a warm and stimulating environment. Scrupulous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance has resulted in the school knowing what is working and what is in need of improvement. The sharp focus on checking teaching and assessing pupils' performance has enabled the school to build upon the high standards found at the previous inspection. Excellent partnerships with other schools help staff to keep up to date in their teaching and considerably broaden the curriculum and pupils' learning experiences. The exciting and recently improved curriculum is very well constructed to ensure that pupils develop the necessary skills, often through practical tasks and investigations. Excellent partnerships with parents and carers support pupils' well-being and progress.

The overall quality of teaching is excellent and never less than good. Teachers' strong subject knowledge enables them to plan interesting lessons which rigorously build pupils' skills. They are often very effective in challenging pupils of different levels of attainment. However, occasionally, work is rather easy for more capable pupils during lesson introductions and, in Reception, play activities do not always extend the more capable children.

The sustained successful leadership of the headteacher, in close partnership with all

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teaching and non-teaching staff and a first rate governing body, is key to the school's success. The school has set clear and achievable priorities for the future and, given its record of high attainment and continued improvement, it is extremely well placed to build further on its many strengths and has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of more capable pupils' excellent learning and progress by:
 - ensuring that these pupils are regularly challenged during lesson introductions and throughout lessons
 - teachers providing consistently challenging play activities in Reception.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school because they feel very safe and lessons are very well organised. They are keen to learn, very articulate and their excellent behaviour helps to ensure lessons flow smoothly. Pupils concentrate very well, listen attentively and work together very constructively. They develop their ability to learn through listening and watching as well as by investigating and solving problems. For example, in an outstanding Year 2 mathematics lesson when pupils learned about capacity, they enjoyed working in small teams to first estimate the amounts different containers might hold before learning how to accurately measure in litres and millilitres. Their progress in understanding, reading and using the measuring scales accurately was excellent. This meant pupils were very well prepared for applying their knowledge to more complex problems involving liquid capacity.

All pupils' achievement is exceptional. In the current Year 2, attainment is more even for more capable pupils between subjects than it was in 2009. It is particularly high at the higher National Curriculum Level 3 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Challenging targets are met and exceeded. The few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do extremely well too and, by Year 2, the vast majority achieve at least the standards expected nationally.

Pupils learn to work independently from the minute they enter Reception. As they continue through the school they are competent when using computers in different subjects. They are responsible and very mature in the way they share ideas and explore problems. They play key parts in contributing to the work of the school and their community, for example through the school council, fundraising and charity work and the way they act as role models to younger pupils. Along with demonstrating their responsibility within school, of special note is pupils' respect for other cultures, religions and lifestyles. Reflecting St John's Healthy School and Activemark awards, pupils show their excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles by their keenness to eat fruit and vegetables at snack and lunchtimes. They also eagerly take part in the rich range of physical activities, including ones with other schools through Sports Partnerships. Pupils develop their economic understanding well by managing small

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budgets. Pupils' good attendance and excellent achievement in basic skills mean they are well prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Just over a half of the teaching observed was outstanding while the rest was good. Classrooms are rich with imaginative activities and displays which capture pupils' interest and build on their learning. The key strengths are high expectations, lively teaching and strong engagement of pupils, often through practical or collaborative tasks. Lesson planning consistently provides very clear learning purposes and an extensive range of activities which are well adapted to reflect the different abilities of pupils. Practical resources, including new technology, are used particularly well to engage pupils and bring relevance to classroom learning. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very thorough and used very well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and to set challenging targets. Pupils are very clear about their own targets and understand what they need to do to improve. However, occasionally, during lesson introductions, teachers' explanations and questions do not focus enough on more

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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capable pupils which prevents them learning as rapidly as they do during group work. Support staff make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

The recent restructuring of the curriculum provides a very good balance for pupils to create, solve problems and directly learn skills. Subjects are linked together very well and subjects such as art and design and technology, as well as visits and visitors, bring learning alive and are often used to underpin academic learning. By Year 2, there are excellent examples of pupils' writing and mathematics across the curriculum, including in science. The outdoor classroom is used extremely well for investigative work in biological science and other areas of the curriculum. The school has a rich array of well-attended activities outside normal hours. Excellent links with the community and other schools, including in those in the confederation, further strengthen the curriculum and enrich pupils' learning experiences.

Pastoral support, guidance and care are outstanding with the well-being of every child being paramount. Adults provide excellent support for the social and emotional development of all pupils and the school has excellent links with parents, carers and other agencies to ensure pupils' welfare needs are well met. Induction to the school and transfer arrangements to junior school are strong.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a very clear direction and has communicated her vision for improvement very well to her staff. Her energetic and determined leadership have created confidence and a strong sense of purpose in the school. Staff and governors work very successfully together to create an ethos where all concerned with the school have high expectations for all pupils to do well. Staff are empowered to play their part in raising achievement and this is important in this small school where staff have many responsibilities. The headteacher's rigorous analysis of teaching and her robust analysis of data, which also involves all staff, ensure that provision is inclusive and often adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Staff are valued as the best resource and the school ensures their skills are kept up to date. Governors are extremely well led by a knowledgeable Chair of Governors. They support the school very well, fulfil all statutory duties and provide excellent challenge.

Safeguarding receives the highest priority and is firmly established in policies, working practices and the ethos of the school. Governors maintain a strong oversight. This is

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endorsed by the high degree of support from parents and carers in the questionnaires returned. The school is active in tackling discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity extremely well. The effect is seen in the high achievement of all groups of pupils. The school makes an excellent impact on promoting community cohesion locally and pupils of all backgrounds get on extremely well together. Global links are very well established, reflecting the school's International Award and the school is currently in the process of developing its links with schools in different contexts to widen pupils' understanding of the different communities in Britain today.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy coming to school and settle quickly because of the close links with parents and carers and the excellent care and support they receive. Children's attainment on entry varies but, overall, is above the level expected. The vibrant and stimulating curriculum and excellent teaching ensure they make rapid progress. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's language, thinking and personal skills. Children's literacy and numeracy development is extremely well supported in the context of a broad and practical curriculum. By the end of Reception, their attainment is well above average in communication, language and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Adults strike a good balance of more formal, adult-led activities and those activities children select for themselves. Topics, such as 'Rosie's Walk', really interest the children and provide some exciting learning opportunities. For example, after reading the story, children created models and pictures and programmed computer controlled toys with simple directions. Their subsequent writing was extremely

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good and their many worthwhile practical experiences about this topic enlivened their learning. Both indoors and outdoors, children develop their confidence and ability to cooperate together through purposeful play. There is a rich array of role play and other play activities but, occasionally, these do not present enough challenge for more capable children. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is excellent with very close and effective team work between all staff. Assessment is very thorough and carefully analysed to check the impact of provision on children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires were very pleased with the experiences the school provides for their children. They believe the school keeps their children very safe, that their children enjoy their time at the school and are progressing extremely well. However, a few parents and carers expressed concern that the challenge of more capable children could be a little better at times. The inspection team finds these children's needs are usually met but there are a few instances when their learning activities are rather easy. Very few parents and carers expressed other concerns and none of these could be supported by inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's Church of England Aided Infant 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	92	4	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	85	7	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	60	40	0	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	69	15	31	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	88	6	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	63	18	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	77	11	23	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)	36	75	11	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	63	17	35	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	58	19	40	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	50	19	40	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	81	9	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	94	2	4	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



10 June 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of St John's Church of England Aided Infant School, Churt GU10 2JE

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed finding out about the interesting things you do. This letter is to tell you what we found on our inspection.

We were very impressed with your school and with the way you learn. Your school provides you with an outstanding education. Here are some of the many things your school does very well.

- You make excellent progress and your attainment is high in reading, writing, mathematics and science by Year 2.
- You make your school such a special place because you are very good learners, are friendly, work hard and behave extremely well.
- You have many exciting opportunities for investigative science, information and communication technology, art and design and technology.
- You have really good opportunities for sport and for outside visits.
- Your teachers are very good at making your lessons interesting.
- Staff take very good care of you and you told us how safe you feel.
- Your headteacher leads you all extremely well and all the staff and governors think very carefully about what is best for you.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve.

- Make sure your work is never too easy, particularly for those of you who are capable of achieving more.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and carry on working hard in all you do. Well done for doing so much for the community. Please keep this up!

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector

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