

# St John's CofE (C) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	124278
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380850
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	86
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Salmon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Donna Calloway
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Wombourne Road Swindon Dudley DY3 4NB
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Doris Bell

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed four members of staff during seven lessons, covering approximately three-and-a-half hours of teaching. As well as observing full or part lessons, she spent time observing sessions when pupils were learning letters and sounds. She also heard pupils read, watched them being taught in small groups and individually, analysed their work, and discussed their learning and school life with them. Meetings were held with senior and middle managers, and representatives of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including information relating to the attainment and achievement of all groups of pupils, the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, and evidence of monitoring and evaluation. She also spoke to parents and carers, and analysed 42 parental questionnaire responses, together with the responses to the questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has an average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or a statement is above average, although it varies in different year groups. The proportion of pupils who join the school at different times during the school year is well above average. In 2011, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The present headteacher took up post in October 2010.

The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. It also holds a bronze Geography Award, the Activemark, and a Football Charter mark. It has its own breakfast club. The previously privately run Nursery, which operates mornings only, is now managed solely by the governing body and was inspected as part of this inspection. It has 17 children on roll at present, who are taught alongside Reception Year children.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because there is more to do to raise achievement in writing and mathematics, to improve marking and involve pupils in assessing and improving their own work, and to ensure the whole school community is clear about how the school fosters good behaviour. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average in Year 6, though higher in reading than in mathematics and writing. Children currently in Nursery and Reception Year are making good progress, as are pupils in Years 3 and 4. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their learning is tailored closely to their different learning needs and they are supported well.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is now led well because senior leaders have become more rigorous in following up areas for improvement. As a result, teaching is improving and much good teaching was observed during the inspection. Inconsistencies remain in the attention teachers give to literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.
- A quarter of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire raised concerns about behaviour and the way the school deals with it. The inspector investigated and found behaviour to be, typically, satisfactory, although good behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils enjoy learning and they work hard in lessons. They feel safe and they know how to keep themselves safe. All parents and carers say their children feel safe at school.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Planned actions have improved the quality of teaching by tackling underperformance and providing well-focused guidance for staff. The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils and the developing links between subjects are adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate achievement in writing and mathematics by:
  - focusing pupils on their targets in writing every time they write
  - sharpening pupils' mental skills in mathematics further, so that they can understand and solve number problems faster
  - ensuring marking comments are more specific about what pupils need to do to improve
  - ensuring all teachers focus on and mark literacy and numeracy skills when they are used in different subjects
  - involving pupils more in target setting and in assessing and improving their own work.
  
- Improve behaviour by:
  - ensuring all staff understand and implement the systems in place to foster good behaviour in lessons, around the school and in the playground
  - ensuring all parents and carers understand the school's approaches to managing behaviour.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers say their children make good progress. However, progress is not yet consistently good across the school and achievement over time is, therefore, satisfactory. Children start Nursery with literacy and numeracy skills below the levels expected for their age. They start Reception Year broadly at age-related expectations, continue to make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1. Progress dips in Year 1, but pupils catch up in Year 2, making satisfactory progress overall. Issues specific to last year's Year 6 led to a drop in outcomes in 2011. The school is back on track this year, with broadly average attainment and more pupils on course to reach higher National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are learning rapidly and making good progress, closing the gap on pupils nationally.

In reading, attainment is average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to read and spell unfamiliar words. Even the most reluctant readers know how to sound words out and use pictures and text to help them. Pupils use grammar and punctuation satisfactorily, but, even in Year 6, they make careless mistakes sometimes, which they rectify easily when asked to check their work. When pupils are engaged and stimulated by the tasks and know exactly what they are aiming to do, learning is good. This was evident in Year 6 as pupils read their imaginative story openings and in Year 4 where they improved sentences using adjectives and adverbs. Both lessons led to good progress. The Year 6 focus on using the senses to create an atmospheric setting engaged the reader well.

Pupils' ability to solve mathematical problems has improved significantly in the past year. Their recall of number facts, although not yet as rapid as it might be, is

improving. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used multiplication well to calculate the areas of regular and irregular shapes. Pupils' mathematical skills are being honed through numeracy 'wakeup' books, which they use each morning, and which, they say, 'puts you in the mood for learning'.

### **Quality of teaching**

While satisfactory overall, increasingly good teaching is helping pupils make better progress. Most parents and carers say their children are taught well. Inspection findings do not support this view because teaching is not yet consistently good in all classes. Children are taught well in Nursery and Reception Year. Good attention is paid to their individual starting points and well-planned activities, indoors and out, foster good learning and personal development. Throughout the school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Their work is planned well to meet their individual needs and they are supported and challenged well in lessons. Parents and carers praise the school for its work in this area.

Teachers explain learning objectives to pupils throughout the school and clarify the steps they need to take in the lesson to reach them. In the best lessons, the objectives are then revisited regularly and activities fine-tuned to keep learning as rapid as possible. Most teachers use their good subject knowledge to probe and extend pupils' thinking through open-ended questions that involve pupils of all abilities. In good lessons, they also encourage pupils to use what they have learned in other lessons, to help with new learning. This happened, for example, in a design and technology session, when pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their literacy and numeracy skills effectively to write instructions on how to create a container and to measure accurately as they re-assembled and strengthened different types of containers. This good teaching of basic skills through other subjects is not yet consistent across the school.

Teachers, mostly, manage pupils' behaviour well, ensuring that it does not disrupt learning, but not all staff implement the school's systems fully. Noise levels are occasionally allowed to get too high and this can distract some pupils and slow their learning. Nevertheless, teachers, usually successfully, encourage pupils to listen carefully, reflect on their actions, and help and support each other. The curriculum helps in this, particularly through the programme for personal, social, and health education.

Teachers track and record pupils' progress accurately and most use the information effectively in planning. All staff are using the agreed marking policy, but improvement points given to pupils are not always specific enough and pupils are not always focused on their writing and numeracy targets when they use these skills in different subjects; nor are they secure enough about their targets and how to achieve them, or sufficiently involved in setting them. This limits the impact of marking and target setting.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The concerns raised about behaviour were investigated thoroughly and behaviour

was found to be satisfactory, although only good behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils reported that bullying, mostly name-calling, does happen occasionally. They know what bullying is and about the different types of bullying there might be. They also know what to do about it. They are confident that bullying and any other form of harassment are sorted quickly if the headteacher gets involved, but feel that, occasionally, the response of other staff is slower. Most parents and carers who spoke to the inspector felt the school handled behaviour well. The school records all incidents and parental concerns meticulously, along with the action taken to deal with them. Pupils understand and appreciate the range of rewards and sanctions that encourage good behaviour and attendance. They help and encourage each other to gain class awards in these areas.

Attendance is above average. Pupils report that they enjoy school, feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including when using various forms of technology. All parents and carers agree their children feel safe. Pupils say they like school because 'everyone is usually friendly' and they 'learn a lot'. They appreciate the improvements in mathematical learning particularly, especially the practical, investigative work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 thoroughly enjoyed estimating the size and distance of features in the playground, then checking them with measuring wheels, rods and tapes and recording their findings on a chart.

Pupils help around the school willingly and show initiative, for example, raising funds for different charities at home and abroad, and older pupils help younger ones in school readily, including at play and lunchtimes. Pupils who join the school part way through their primary education are welcomed and supported. The school council is starting to give pupils more of a voice in school, which they appreciate. The school, rightly, intends to extend the role of the council in contributing to school improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership team, under the clear direction of the headteacher, is successfully driving improvement. Staff are held to account robustly for the pupils' progress. Most have a clear understanding of their individual and collective responsibility for the school's outcomes and are committed to further improvement. The school has successfully tackled the recommendations from the previous inspection. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures provide staff with sharply focused areas for improvement, which form the basis for subsequent monitoring and for performance management. They are followed up with well-targeted support and professional development, all of which have improved teaching and learning. The impact of all of this is evident in the recent improvements in mathematics and in the good provision in Nursery and Reception Year; these demonstrate the school's capacity to improve.

The governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily. Guided by the comprehensive information it receives from the headteacher, it is developing the way it questions and challenges the school about its outcomes. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and well-founded, the school development plan has the right priorities and progress towards them is checked rigorously. The curriculum supports pupils' learning and personal development satisfactorily and makes a good contribution to their spiritual,

moral, social, and cultural development. For example, the good range of visits, visitors, and links with other schools, develops in pupils a greater awareness of their own place in the world and of the range and diversity of faiths and cultures at home and abroad. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles all forms of discrimination satisfactorily. It ensures that all pupils can participate in everything it has to offer. It helps parents and carers to become more involved in their children's learning. The vast majority appreciate what the school does for them and their children, even though not all are well informed about the school's approaches to behaviour. The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is managed well and contributes to their good progress; the school uses its good partnerships with external agencies effectively to help in this. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Pupils work and play in a safe, attractive learning environment, where they are looked after well.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St John's CofE (C) Primary School, Swindon, DY3 4NB**

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave me when I came to inspect your school. Thank you, too, to those of you who completed the inspection questionnaires. They and the discussions I had with you helped me understand your views of the school and what it does for you. I was pleased to note your good attendance and to hear that you enjoy school and learning and that you find everyone friendly. I made a special point of checking what behaviour is usually like, because you and your parents and carers raised some concerns about it. I saw only good behaviour during the inspection, but I listened to what you said about bullying and about behaviour in lessons and concluded that, overall, behaviour is satisfactory. You, clearly, understand that some pupils have difficulty managing their behaviour and certainly you appreciate what the school does to encourage good behaviour. It was also good to hear that you know what to do if you are bullied, or know of any bullying and that you trust your headteacher to sort things out quickly.

You go to a satisfactory school that is working hard to improve your progress. To help, I have asked it to:

- increase your ability to calculate quickly, ensuring you understand and use your literacy and numeracy targets, and give you more precise guidance on how to assess and improve your own learning
- improve behaviour by making sure all staff do the same things to encourage you to behave well and help your parents and carers to understand what the school does to ensure behaviour is good.

You can all help by ensuring you behave well at all times, continue to work hard, and take every opportunity to practise your writing and mathematics. I hope you will continue to enjoy learning in the future as much as you do now, and I wish you well.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell  
Lead inspector

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