

St John's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105929
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	377327
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2012
Lead inspector	Gordon Alston

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Brighthouse
Headteacher	Sarah Rubin
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
School address	Daisy Bank Avenue Swinton Manchester M27 5FU
Telephone number	0161 7374622
Fax number	Not applicable
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gordon Alston
David Byrne
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Additional inspector
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Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed eight teachers teaching 18 lessons. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, parents, carers and school staff. Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed the work they have been doing in class this academic year. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school self-evaluation summary, school improvement plan, safeguarding documents and the school's own data for checking on pupils' progress. Inspectors analysed 55 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of pupils speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by School Action Plus and pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has achieved Healthy School status. It has met the standards required of the Financial Management in 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because, although teaching overall is good and some is outstanding, a few inconsistencies exist. The school is on a journey of sustained improvement and provides a warm, welcoming environment where pupils feel cared for, safe and secure and make good progress. The vast majority of parents and carers also supports this view.
- Pupils build well on the good start they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They continue to make good progress and reach above average levels of attainment in English and in mathematics by the end of Year 6. All groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well. Reading is a strength across the school.
- Teaching is good because lessons are well planned, inspiring and motivating. This is especially so at the upper end of Key Stage 2 where outstanding teaching produces highly motivated pupils. However, when teaching is less effective, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills. A lack of up to date resources for information and communication technology (ICT) slows progress at times, and reduces opportunities for pupils to develop their skills across all subjects. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, tasks are not always sufficiently challenging or interesting.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, enjoy coming to school and behave well. Their above average attendance continues to improve and many never miss a day.
- Effective leadership is driving improvements well. Staff changes and the reduction of a deficit budget have been managed successfully. Teaching is monitored very closely. Sharply focused actions and regular checks on staff performance, along with training, is leading to more teaching being good or better. The curriculum is creative and well balanced, and provides well for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good with an increasing amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to learn independently
 - providing a more up-to-date range of ICT resources
 - ensuring that in the Early Years Foundation Stage, all tasks are challenging and interesting
 - using teachers with higher-level skills to mentor, support and model exemplary practice to others, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that their children are making good progress. Inspection findings endorse these views. Pupils achieve well.

As a direct result of good leadership, the quality of teaching and the behaviour of pupils have improved. This has increased pupils' progress, resulting in higher attainment. In national tests over the last three years, there has been an increase in standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics in Year 6. All sizeable groups make good progress; including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those learning English as an additional language and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

From starting points that are usually below those expected when they join the nursery, children make good progress. They settle happily and thrive in the secure environment. Pupils continue to make good progress and attain above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Progress in English was previously falling behind that in other subjects, but effective action, including specific targeted one-to-one support, has resulted in rapid progress this year, particularly for more-able pupils. The school has narrowed the gap successfully where there is a difference between how groups of pupils perform when set against national norms.

In the vast majority of lessons, pupils make good progress because lessons are well planned with interesting and challenging tasks. The teaching of reading is a strong feature of the school's provision. Pupils are linking letters and the sounds they make successfully to tackle unfamiliar words when they are reading and writing. Those pupils who read to inspectors are confident readers and their understanding of language construction is growing securely.

This emphasis on improving pupils' reading skills is raising attainment successfully. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. Pupils demonstrate clear enjoyment of reading. The majority of

pupils takes books home and a number said that they read with their parents or carers, and that their favourite stories are traditional tales.

Quality of teaching

Pupils, parents and carers alike say that teaching is good. Inspection evidence from lesson observations, monitoring documentation and scrutiny of pupils' work over time, supports this view.

Although teaching is good, there are some inconsistencies. In upper Key Stage 2, teaching is outstanding. Teaching of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall, but a little inconsistent. Occasionally, activities lack challenge and interest for children or do not have a clear focus of what the children are to learn.

Examples of good or better teaching were seen in almost every class in the school. The very best lessons promote good application of basic skills and development of problem-solving skills. For example, in an effective Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils collaborated well when working in small groups to solve problems relating to using a time-table, linking time to making a journey. Teachers use questioning very effectively to move pupils' thinking forward. The pace is brisk in most lessons and tasks are linked to an interesting, fun-filled focus, which motivate pupils to engage and respond enthusiastically. This was illustrated in a Year 6 literacy lesson; pupils had to produce positive and negative character descriptions after comparing how Chaucer used vocabulary in his poems, 'The Knight' and 'The Summoner'. They all made gains in their understanding of adjectives and similes, producing amusing, descriptive poems of their own.

Where teaching is less effective, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves and explore their ideas without teacher intervention. This sometimes slows progress. A notable constraint affecting the quality of teaching of ICT and its use across the curriculum is the lack of up-to-date resources to support pupils' learning.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs ensures that work is well matched to their needs and abilities. Planning and curriculum content is generally matched well to pupils' needs and abilities.

In both Key Stages, reading groups are well organised. In Key Stage 2, challenge for the more-able readers has been a focus for the school this year, and is already starting to raise their attainment.

Teachers use assessment data accurately to plan work and set challenging targets for pupils. Teachers' marking and verbal feedback is constructive and ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. Good adult role models and teaching promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development extremely well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In line with the inspection findings, the majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed the view that behaviour is typically good. Pupils also agree and say they enjoy attending this good school.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and ensure that pupils play their part in the effective learning that goes on in lessons. They speak highly of staff and feel safe and secure in school. Because of pupils' good behaviour and safety over time, and the way these aspects are effectively promoted, the school is a calm, safe and harmonious community. Pupils develop into considerate, friendly and confident young people. They show a mature sense of responsibility towards others, through formal roles such as school councillors and play leaders, and also by their general conduct and relationships. Pupils are polite and respectful of the feelings of others.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, for example, through wise use of the Internet. They are confident to explain how to recognise and avoid different forms of bullying. Incidents of bullying in school are rare and any name-calling or playground upsets are resolved quickly. Indeed, playtimes and lunchtimes are happy occasions and good use is being made of the attractive school grounds, for example, the large play equipment. Attendance has risen and is now above average. This is due to the school's positive actions that contribute significantly to keeping up the expectations for regular attendance, and offer strong support to families and pupils.

Leadership and management

The strength of leadership and management shown by leaders and members of the governing body is exemplified in the successful raising of attainment and the improvements to the building while guiding the school through a difficult period of staffing disruption. Key to this success has been the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. The school is now firmly focused on improving the quality of teaching further. Leaders have a strong belief in performance management and the impact of targeted professional development has been positive. Staff readily share ideas and support each other. Continuing training, for example, in promoting pupils' numeracy skills, has resulted in recent marked improvements.

The curriculum is planned effectively to ensure a wealth of opportunities for promoting pupils' personal development. There are many opportunities to promote the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, through personal and health education lessons, assemblies and links with other areas of learning. The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully. Pupil performance is tracked carefully to ensure that all groups of pupils do equally well, so that none is disadvantaged. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

Members of the governing body have a wide range of skills and professional backgrounds. These skills are used well in helping them play an important strategic role in school development in both supporting and challenging school leaders. All leaders and managers, including the governing body, have a good understanding of what the school does well and the areas for further improvement. An agreed improvement plan is in place based on effective self-evaluation and monitoring

systems. This evidence confirms the school's good capacity for future sustained improvement.

The school has developed effective relationships and engages well with parents and carers, resulting in positive support for learning at home and raised aspirations for their children. Safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements and are effective. The school site is maintained well and staff have a robust knowledge of procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare and safety.

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).

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 up 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.



25 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's C of E Primary School, Manchester, M27 5FU

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you all for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work. We were very impressed with the way you spoke confidently and how well you put across your ideas.

Your school is a good school because you make good progress in lessons and treat each other well. You told us, and your parents and carers agreed, that the school is a happy place to be.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress. Older pupils also make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Your teachers care about you and do their best to ensure that you do as well as you can at school. They work hard to improve their teaching skills and plan lessons to make learning fun, but also make sure you progress well. They ask you challenging questions to help you learn. Sometimes though, teaching does not help you to learn as well as you might. To make teaching even better I have asked your teachers to:

- let you have more opportunities to learn for yourselves with little help from them
- improve the equipment the school has for ICT by updating what you already have
- spread the really good teaching we saw to all staff, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

I hope you keep working hard in lessons and building strong friendships. You play a big part in making your good school even better. I wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Alston
Lead inspector

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