



St John's CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124254
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281671
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector David Driscoll AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Quarry Bank Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Keele
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Newcastle, Staffordshire ST5 5AF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01782 296000
Number on roll	157	Fax number	01782 296000
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Stuart Ansell
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Price

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school that serves the village of Keele and its surrounding area, which includes a university. The proximity of the university has a significant impact on the characteristics of the pupils who attend the school, as a relatively high proportion are the children of overseas students. This means that, in some years, many more pupils join and leave during the school year than is usually the case. The proportion of pupils who speak little or no English on joining the school is very high in some years, as is the proportion from minority ethnic groups and the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities. The pupils' standards on joining the school vary from year to year, but are usually average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education and good value for money. The school's evaluation of its own performance agrees with that of inspectors, and this is supported by the positive views of parents. The school works exceptionally hard to meet the very varied needs of the pupils. Most pupils make good progress, as a result of good teaching and leave with standards that are well above average. However, the progress made by pupils who are learning English for the first time is outstanding. Progress in reading is very good, but progress in mathematics is closer to satisfactory than good.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and results in children making good progress and attaining above the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Pupils have mature attitudes and their enjoyment of school is exceptional. Behaviour is good and they attend well. The range of extra activities offered is especially good, but not enough mathematics work is carried out in other topics. Pupils are well cared for and safe in the school. They generally receive good help and guidance, but this is much better in literacy than in numeracy.

The school is well led and managed. Senior staff and governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's performance. Actions taken to improve the school have proved successful, although more emphasis needs to be placed on developing numeracy skills in other subjects. The school is well placed to continue the good progress made since it was last inspected.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress made by pupils in mathematics by drawing up clearer plans to make more use of numeracy across the curriculum.
- Provide more written feedback to pupils on how to improve their work in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils make good progress. Children join the Foundation Stage with standards that are typical for their age. They make good progress and attain slightly above the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. Progress in reading, writing and number work is particularly good, while progress in their personal development is satisfactory. This good progress is sustained as pupils move through the school, so they leave with standards that are well above average. The school exceeds its targets for pupils' attainment in national tests, although these targets are not particularly demanding. Standards in reading are particularly high, so most pupils leave the school able to read demanding texts independently. Pupils make more progress in their reading and writing than they do in their mathematics, where progress is closer to satisfactory than good. While most pupils do well at the school, those who are learning English for the first time make outstanding progress. Many arrive with no English at all, yet within

weeks have developed sufficient language to play a part in lessons and communicate with their friends. They leave Year 6 with standards that are comparable with their friends, despite starting from further behind.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Children show outstanding enthusiasm for school. Their confidence flourishes and, by the end of Year 6, most have developed very mature attitudes. Pupils get along with each other very well, showing real respect for others' views. They enjoy learning new things and speak enthusiastically about their work. Pupils behave well because they respect staff and know and abide by the school rules. Younger children in the Reception class develop good levels of confidence and independence, but a small minority do not always listen carefully to their teacher and others.

Attendance is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well supported by adults and that any bullying is quickly sorted out. Pupils develop self-esteem because their achievements and good deeds are valued and rewarded. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe and healthy.

Pupils have a good awareness of their role in a community. For example, members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and say the headteacher acts on their suggestions. They have been quick to raise concerns about the quality of the toilets. Younger children, however, do not have the opportunity to play a part in the council. Pupils learn good skills for future life as they work in teams and class groups. Their good literacy, numeracy and computer skills stand them in good stead for their future education.

The school successfully celebrates the rich cultural diversity of its pupils so that through lessons, displays and events pupils gain a good understanding of world cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good, so pupils make good progress in their learning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons, because they have excellent relationships with the teachers who maintain a quiet order in their classrooms.

The school has been very successful in improving the teaching of literacy, which has resulted in pupils making particularly good progress in this area. Teachers pay a great deal of attention to literacy. They plan to include it in all their lessons, regardless of the topic. Less attention is paid to developing pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects. Also, while marking in English is good, in mathematics, teachers do not give enough indication to pupils as to how they can improve their work.

Based on their good information on pupils' progress, teachers plan very well to build on previous work. Lessons flow from one topic to another, with pupils clearly able to see the links between them and understand why they are studying a topic. Most work is demanding, but attainable, because pupils receive good support from the teachers and other staff. Some starter activities, however, can go on for too long, with the work pitched only at a level suitable for the middle attainers. Pupils with learning difficulties are given good support to help them achieve their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Pupils have interesting, exciting things to do in lessons. They effectively apply skills taught in literacy and information and communication technology, but do not have so many opportunities to apply numeracy skills, for example, adding measurement to a design. Learning is enriched by the interesting range of visits and visitors such as working with a poet or experiencing the thrill of a live theatre group. Many pupils take part in clubs and other stimulating things outside normal lessons. Pupils also enjoy creative themed weeks such as Mythical Monsters when activities are carefully planned to combine aspects such as music, dance and literacy. The school provides very good opportunities for music-making in choir, orchestra and musical instrument tuition. All pupils learn French, developing impressive conversational skills. There is good emphasis on fitness, competitive sport and swimming.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is good. Through the very good relationships they build with the pupils staff, ensure that all individuals feel safe, happy and secure. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good. Pupils know where to go for advice and say adults listen and sort out problems.

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, or who are particularly able, receive good support and guidance. However, support for children who have English as their second language is outstanding because of careful assessments and provision for their specific needs. Staff review children's progress regularly. However, pupils' targets in mathematics are not always clear enough to guide future improvement.

Arrangements for settling new children into Reception and the main school are good. Well thought out transition arrangements enable Year 6 pupils to feel confident about their move to high school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. There is an exceptional emphasis on ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated equally.

Governors and senior staff get a clear picture of the school's performance because there are good systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. Numerous effective methods are used to check on the school's performance. For example, groups of pupils, such as those relatively new to the school or from minority ethnic backgrounds, are interviewed to make sure they are happy and to identify where the school could do more to help them. The views of parents are taken very seriously when evaluating the school's performance. For example, the curriculum is to include more creative work, despite this already being good, because parents requested it.

Effective action planning has helped the school to improve teaching and standards in English. However, more emphasis could be given to developing numeracy in other subjects.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, we came to see you at school recently to check on how well you are doing.

We really enjoyed ourselves in your school. Mrs Clarke was so impressed by the school council. You were sensible, very well behaved and represented your school very well indeed.

Many of you told us how much you like being in school. Most of all, you like all the friends you have and your teachers and other grown-ups. We think you work hard and learn lots in your lessons. You are very good at reading and we were amazed at how well you spoke French in the assembly. Those of you who are just learning to speak English are getting on very well indeed. We have asked the grown-ups in charge of the school to give you more work with numbers in your other topics, and to tell you where you can do even better in your maths.

The grown-ups look after you well and make sure you are safe, so you don't have any worries and all of you are happy. We thought it was great that Year 6 look after younger pupils, and even remind them not to talk in assembly.

Thank you for helping us with our work and for being so kind to us.