



# St John The Baptist Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 111668  
**Local Authority** Stockton-on-Tees  
**Inspection number** 289023  
**Inspection dates** 3-4 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geoffrey Cooper

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	St John's Way
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Ragworth, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 0FB
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11	<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 607123
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Fax number</b>	01642 677100
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	208	<b>Chair</b>	Father David Stephenson
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maxine Coss
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2002		

---

<b>Age group</b> 3-11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 3-4 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289023
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St John the Baptist Primary School serves a disadvantaged area. A high proportion of pupils is entitled to a free school meal. There are more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, than is found in most schools. The school is host to an infant assessment and support unit. These pupils are integrated within mainstream classes. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. A very small number of pupils are learning English as a second language.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good and improving school. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Parents' views of the school are very positive. It provides good value for money and is well placed to improve further. Good improvement has been made since the school was previously inspected.

Children enter school with well below average attainment. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage where provision, including teaching, is good. Despite this, many have not reached the standard expected as they enter Year 1. Standards are below average by the time they reach Year 2. This represents good progress overall, a measure of a lively curriculum and good teaching. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards are broadly average. The school carefully tracks the performance of pupils, setting demanding targets to overcome the difference between the test scores of boys and girls. Recent improvement in test results includes much better mathematics and science results and more pupils attaining above the nationally expected Level 4. This is because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. It is successful in making pupils think. Good achievement is not limited to English, mathematics and science. For example, standards in information and communication technology (ICT), a strength of the school, are above those expected nationally for pupils this age. Achievement is strongly supported by good personal development. Behaviour is frequently exemplary; attitudes are very positive. However, some work is untidy. Below average attendance is a challenge to the school. Strong measures are in hand to deal with this. Displays of pupils' work show that they understand how to stay safe and healthy, reflect on their contribution to the community and develop the skills necessary for their future. Enjoyment of school is clear in all their work.

The good teaching found throughout the school is complemented by a rich and engaging curriculum. Pupils are stimulated by interesting activities planned for them. Teachers ensure that learners know the relevance of their tasks. Progress is carefully monitored, enabling the school to set challenging targets which have recently been exceeded. Rigorous procedures ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Pupils are very well known by the staff and their needs are identified accurately. Good work with parents and outside agencies addresses these needs efficiently. The improved achievement made by the pupils is the result of efficient leadership and management. The school is very well led by the headteacher who is strongly supported by her deputy, senior management team and staff. Teachers stress the strength of teamwork. The sense of purpose and clarity of vision are very well supported by robust strategies for evaluating and developing the school. The school's vision statement says, 'Learning is fun. Achieving is cool.' In this school, they are. Committed and supportive governors have a secure understanding of their legal responsibilities. Their recent self-evaluation exercise has identified a programme for development. This is effectively included in the school improvement plan.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further, especially in Key Stage 1, in English and for boys.

- Improve attendance.
- Develop pupils' presentation of work including their handwriting skills.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average. They vary a great deal from year to year. Tracking systems show clearly the impact that the learning difficulties of pupils in the infant assessment unit have on the school's results. At times, these pupils make up a large proportion of the small year groups. The effect of this continues through to the end of Key Stage 2. In the work seen, standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and broadly average at the end of Year 6. This accurately reflects the outcomes of the 2006 national tests. Standards are much better in mathematics and science than in English because of the emphasis on practical skills in the teaching of those subjects. Girls do better than boys in tests. This, too, can be tracked back to the greater number of boys admitted to the assessment unit. With attainment on entry well below average, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Some pupils with special educational needs make very good progress that enables them to reach or occasionally exceed national standards. The small number learning English as a new language progress at a similar rate as other pupils. Achievement is good and goes beyond the development of basic skills. The fruits of this achievement can be seen across the curriculum in the good standards reached in art and design and music.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and show very good attitudes to learning. A child in Year 6 said, 'I think this is a fantastic school. I absolutely love mathematics.' Behaviour, relationships and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Opportunities for personal development promote confidence, personal skills and self-assurance. A thorough analysis of the feelings and emotions depicted in a short film helped pupils in Years 5 and 6 to understand the thoughts of an elderly person. Pupils are well aware of the need to stay safe, adopt a healthy lifestyle, and to prepare themselves well for the future. Pupils' opinions are sought from the nursery onwards. School councillors take their duties very seriously. They are particularly pleased with the outcomes of the anti-bullying week arranged last year. Most pupils attend well but a small number of families find regular attendance difficult.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good with a significant proportion of outstanding lessons. Most lessons have drive, engage learners well and inform them of what they should know and do. Relationships are consistently good. This results in attentive behaviour and positive attitudes that help learning. Tasks are effectively planned to challenge pupils at all levels of prior attainment. Teachers work extremely well with learning support assistants who lead intervention programmes very effectively. In the outstanding lessons, the teacher creates an intense learning atmosphere where pupils are enthralled by the imaginative and creative activities. Work is well marked. Pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve further. Much staff development time has been devoted to the creation of an understanding of how pupils learn best and to improving the quality of teaching. This is paying dividends.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum, including that in the Foundation Stage, is good. Lively and interesting activities promote creativity well. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 6 have produced silk paintings and batiks of high quality. Recent adjustments to the curriculum have forged useful links between subjects. Pupils have increased opportunities to write across the subjects. Practical and investigative lessons have improved results in mathematics and science. The full impact of these new arrangements on learning has yet to be made. A wide range of activities, from knitting to digital photography, enrich the curriculum well. Educational visits and visitors promote good achievement. Close links with the church and the regular support of the parish priest add to the pupils' personal development. The school makes good use of its links with other bodies to extend pupils' experiences.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The staff are dedicated to providing a safe, caring and supportive learning environment that meets pupils' needs well. The arrangements for pupils' well-being and safeguarding meet requirements. A strong, caring ethos promotes self-confidence and supports strong relationships. Staff readily make available any help or encouragement needed. This results in pupils having a sense of confidence and security that promotes learning well. A very good contribution is made by the recently appointed family liaison officer who supports families in improving their child's attendance, learning and friendships. Links with parents of children in the Foundation Stage get them off to a good start. Recently updated systems for tracking progress and achievement are good and are beginning to impact on achievement. Assessments are used well to identify the next steps for learning.

Good arrangements ensure there is very early identification of those pupils for whom learning is difficult, leading to very effective additional help.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. The headteacher leads the school very well and she has the strong support of her deputy. This quality of leadership extends to other leadership levels where staff have responsibility for supporting decision making and developing subject areas. This well devolved leadership is leading to improvements in pupils' achievement, both academically and socially. Governors are supportive and provide satisfactory governance. The school's vision statement is very aspirational: its sense of purpose is clear and it is aiming high. This level of very effective leadership lies in efficient and secure management strategies that ensure the school runs smoothly and is forward looking. The school is full of exciting initiatives and innovations that are helping to raise standards. Very accurate self-evaluation is reflected in a robust school improvement plan. The progress of actions to address the priorities in this working document is very closely monitored. Good strategies for managing the performance of staff help to ensure that provision for pupils improves. A particular strength of the school is the role of learning support assistants who exude confidence and have been very well trained.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St John the Baptist Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

St John's Way

Ragworth

Stockton-on-Tees

TS19 0FB

3 October 2006

Dear Pupils

We really enjoyed our recent visit to your school. Thank you for all your welcoming smiles and friendly chats.

We agree with you and your parents that your school is a good place to be. It does a great deal to provide you with a good education. Not only are your standards in English, mathematics and science improving but also your behaviour and attitudes put you in a strong position to learn well. We really appreciated some of the art work in the corridor and would have liked some of the silk paintings and batiks to decorate our own homes. You are really good at information and communication technology. We were impressed with your knowledge about how 'Every Child Matters' affects you. The classroom displays of your posters about this show deep understanding. Your lessons are interesting and exciting. All the adults working with you plan very well to give you imaginative opportunities for learning. The school takes good care of you, including keeping a close watch on your progress and what you need to do next to improve your work. All these successes are the result of the way your school is led and managed and the way in which all the adults working with you pull together in your interests.

There are ways in which your school can get even better. Standards need to improve more, especially in writing. Although your school keeps a really close eye on the progress of boys, girls still do better in tests. Some of your work is beautifully presented with good readable handwriting. Sometimes it is quite difficult to read. Attendance is a big worry for your school. It does lots of things to support good attendance but some of you do not come to school often enough to make sure your good lessons have the effect they should. You can do something to help with all of these things. You already work very hard; a little more effort could make things even better.

Thank you for your help with our visit.

Geoff Cooper

(Lead inspector)