

St John's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101873
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	323542
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	345
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Margaret Majumdar
Headteacher	Mrs Marilyn Borlase
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Felix Road West Ealing London W13 0NY
Telephone number	020 8567 6251
Fax number	020 8567 6646

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2009
Inspection number	323542

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St John's is larger than the average primary school. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes. There is private childcare provision on site with an after school club. This provision was inspected and reported on separately. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who do not speak English as their first language, is much higher than average. The main ethnic groups are Afghan and Somali. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also higher than average. The main learning difficulty is moderate learning needs. There is specialist provision for pupils who have speech and language difficulties. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award 2008 and Activemark 2008 for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St John's is a good and improving school where pupils have both good personal development and good academic achievement. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and these comments are typical of many: 'We have been enormously grateful to St John's for helping our daughter and always going the extra mile for her' and, 'We are proud of the fact that our children attend a school that reflects the metropolitan society in which we live.'

Good leadership and management are central to the improved success of the school. Through the clear guidance of the committed headteacher, leaders at all levels have worked well together to secure improvements in many areas. These include raising standards, improving teaching and learning and improving attendance. There is a real sense of togetherness among all staff in providing an exciting and stimulating environment for the pupils. Previous underachievement in areas such as reading and writing has been successfully addressed through whole-school foci and also by carefully targeted interventions. The importance of each pupil as an individual is evident through the excellent equality of opportunity given to them all. As a result, all groups of pupils, no matter their ability or background, make good progress. Governors know the school well and increasingly hold it to account, acting as a critical friend.

From starting points that are well below average, pupils make good progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are just below those seen nationally. This is due to good teaching and learning, and due to a good and increasingly creative curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils well. The school provides pupils with a good level of care, guidance and support. While the pastoral aspect of this is very good, the academic side is not quite as strong. This is because there are inconsistencies in the use of assessment procedures and, as a result, some pupils do not know clearly how they can improve their work. Current tracking of pupils' progress is regular and effective. However, the school is in the process of refining its systems electronically at a whole-school level to ensure that information about pupils' performance can be shared more efficiently and can lead to higher levels of achievement and improved academic standards.

Pupils are welcoming and courteous. They look after each other well and say that they feel very safe and secure in the school. When asked what they would like to see changed about the school, one pupil commented, 'We like it as it is.' Pupils understand very clearly what it means to have a healthy lifestyle, fully justifying the Healthy School award and Activemark. They also welcome the opportunities for taking on responsibilities, such as 'Redcaps' where they look after and organise play for younger children at lunchtimes. They feel that the school listens to them and they are proud of being instrumental in the school having 'grab bags' at lunchtime so they can eat outside. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of cultures other than their own. They accurately rate behaviour as good and say that there is always someone to look after you if you have a problem. When asked to describe their school, typical comments were, 'It's really nice, people are friendly' and, 'It's like we are all a family.'

The fact that the school has improved so much in so many areas indicates that its capacity to improve further is good. The school achieves good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children's introduction to the Nursery is carefully planned and delivered and all groups of children feel very safe and happy. Home visits to all families ensure that information about each child is shared, as staff and parents collaborate in designing each child's 'individual learning journey'. As a result, children settle in very quickly and become enthusiastic learners, full of lively curiosity. Provision for children's welfare is good as all staff are committed to high-quality care. The school is extremely well equipped, safe and secure. Most children enter the Nursery with well below expected levels, many speaking little English. This limits their progress initially, but good support ensures that they make good progress very quickly and leave both the Nursery and Reception with increased skills, knowledge and understanding, but at levels still below those expected for their age. Adults are well qualified and skilled in meeting the needs of very young children. They have high expectations, provide clear routines and enable pupils to build strong, positive relationships. Staff make full use of the indoor and outdoor accommodation to ensure an effective balance between adult-led activities and those where children learn by playing and exploring. Teachers make good use of observations to track the progress of each child and feed this into planning. The impact is clearly seen in the progress made by the children, whose language development and early literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well. Teachers use a creative approach to extend the children's vocabulary and encourage them to imagine different ways of demonstrating their understanding, for example using a text to act out a story as part of their work on healthy eating.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and quality of guidance given to pupils about their progress and the next steps to help them improve their learning.
- Analyse and evaluate data more incisively at whole-school level to raise standards further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From starting points on entry to Nursery that are well below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress and reach standards that are just below average by the end of Year 6. Standards have been rising steadily over the past four years both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Progress throughout the school is good and although the rise in standards has not been as dramatic at the end of Year 6, this is explained by those pupils having lower starting points. The school has successfully tackled underachievement, so that previously underperforming groups, such as higher-attaining pupils, now make good progress. A particular focus on reading through daily literacy workshops and small-group interventions has resulted in significant rises in standards there. Throughout the school pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are vulnerable are supported very effectively. This includes the pupils in the speech and language resource base. This support helps them to overcome possible barriers to learning and achieve at least as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and friendly and talk confidently about themselves and their work. Good behaviour in lessons and around school aids learning well. They say they enjoy lessons; one

child said, 'It's great; we all have fun!' Attendance is improving and is now broadly average. Pupils feel safe in school because they know they can turn to staff if they need help. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They play together positively, listen to one another and value the success of others. This was seen to good effect during an assembly where they enthusiastically showed their appreciation of dance performances from around the world. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. Pupils are keen to get involved in school life and take responsibility for helping others. They are well prepared for the next step in education by the good progress they make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and in the way they work well in groups to solve problems. Pupils in the effective speech and language resource base are integrated back into mainstream lessons as soon as they have acquired the ability to cope.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and as a result pupils are keen to work hard. They say that 'teachers help you learn a lot'. Lessons generally have good pace and there are good opportunities for sharing ideas, which pupils do so very confidently. Teachers and teaching assistants know and understand the learning needs of their pupils well and so help the groups of pupils they work with to be involved successfully in lessons. The work is well matched to the pupils' abilities and they are challenged well with a range of interesting activities. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 5 mathematics lesson where pupils had to cost out the running of a party. Teachers usually explain to the pupils what they should be achieving by the end of the lesson. Sometimes the expected outcomes of lessons are not detailed enough or graduated enough in difficulty. This limits the opportunities for the pupils to be effectively involved in assessing their own learning. Marking is carried out regularly, but there are inconsistencies in how well it helps pupils to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The pupils enjoy their education because it serves their academic needs and allows them to be creative and use their talents effectively. This is illustrated well by the sports trophies achieved and the quality and range of music across the school. The use of broad themes is beginning to allow pupils to see how the different aspects of their learning fit together. However, at present this is inconsistent and not all lessons reflect this linked approach well enough. ICT is used extensively to support pupils' learning and pupils' skills are well advanced. A combination of the themes of work and the integrated use of ICT has been successful in motivating some previously reluctant writers. The curriculum is enriched by the well-planned programme of visits and visitors that link to the themes of work. For example, recent visits by an Olympic athlete and an Eastenders actor have helped raise pupils' aspirations. The curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, many led by or linked with external expertise.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents agree overwhelmingly that their children are well cared for in school. Safeguarding procedures are in place and staff are clear about their responsibilities. Sensitive counselling for

the most vulnerable pupils helps them through their difficulties so they can access learning more easily. Good guidance with regard to behaviour, bullying and racism is having a positive impact. There is effective support in lessons where it is needed so that those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, including those pupils in the speech and language resource base. A significant number of pupils, many of whom do not have English as their first language, enter the school part way through the year. Staff take great care to nurture these pupils, support their families and help them integrate. This ensures that the progress of these pupils is particularly strong. Systems for tracking pupils' achievement over time are in place and pupils have a good understanding of their targets. However, there is no consistent, whole-school practice in the way teachers share assessment information with pupils to accelerate their learning on a daily basis.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher gives clear direction to the work of the school. Working effectively with other school leaders, she has identified the key priorities for improvement and has linked their actions to measurable outcomes for pupils. Consequently, school leaders and governors have a clear idea of the effectiveness of initiatives and are able to evaluate success, as in the drive to raise standards. Governors are knowledgeable and support the school well, and increasingly challenge it whenever necessary. The school sets challenging targets and tracks progress well to help raise standards for all pupils. Equality of opportunity is outstanding, with all groups of pupils achieving equally well and making good levels of improvement. The school is well placed in terms of resources and these are deployed effectively to give good value for money. The school has been very effective in its development of community links both locally and nationally and plans are in place to develop this further on a global level.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's Primary School, London, W13 0NY

We would like to thank you for making us feel very welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing all the interesting work that you do.

Your school is a good one. You are very polite and you behave well. You look after each other well, in roles such as 'redcaps'. You like coming to school and you are very keen to learn. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and listen carefully to your ideas. The adults in school make sure that you are very safe and well cared for. You enjoy the many opportunities that the school offers, such as interesting visits and visitors.

Here are two things that we have asked the school to improve.

- Your teachers should let you know better how well you are learning in all your subjects and give you specific advice on how you can improve the work you do.
- Your school leaders should use clearer ways of monitoring how well you are doing to help you do even better.

You can help by asking your teachers what you should be achieving in lessons and what the next steps in your learning should be.

We would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Thomson

Lead Inspector