

St John's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105712
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	355822
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Shenton
Headteacher	Mr Gerard Kehoe
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2007
School address	James Street Failsworth Manchester M35 9PY
Telephone number	0161 6815713
Fax number	0161 6815713
Email address	info@stjohns.oldham.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Six lessons were observed taught by five teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the monitoring of pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement and documentation relating to safeguarding.

Questionnaires from 81 parents and carers were scrutinised together with those returned by staff and pupils.

- How well pupils attain, make progress and achieve, especially higher-attaining pupils and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- How effectively the school uses assessment data to: track pupils' progress; provide support for pupils' learning; and raise attainment.
- How challenging teaching is, especially for higher-attaining pupils.
- The extent to which leaders and managers, including governors, are bringing about improvement and driving the school forward.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Financial Management Standard in Schools.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It provides good value for money. The quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is outstanding. Leaders and managers evaluate the effectiveness of the school accurately and use the outcomes astutely to identify and tackle effectively areas for improvement. Consequently, the school has improved significantly since the last inspection in nearly all areas of its work. This is especially evident in pupils' achievement and in the quality of teaching and learning. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Year 6 attainment is above average overall and rising. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above average because of the intensive support provided by dedicated and skilful teaching assistants. The lack of similar levels of such intensive support means that attainment in English, although above average and rising, does not match that in mathematics. Pupils enjoy school. They behave well. They are respectful to the adults working with them and to each other. They are very courteous and welcoming to visitors. Pupils are proud of their school. Their above-average levels of attainment, above-average attendance and their good levels of self-confidence and inquisitiveness equip them well for future success when they leave the school.

Good, purposeful teaching promotes good learning and progress. In mathematics, teaching is especially challenging. In English the level of challenge, especially for higher-attaining pupils, is inconsistent. Teaching is lively and engaging. Relationships between adults and pupils are uniformly strong. Good teaching is supported by a good curriculum that meets pupils' needs, engages them effectively in their learning and promotes their skills as independent learners. There is a wide range of enrichment activities that add significantly to pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles and their cultural awareness.

Leaders and managers, especially the headteacher, provide the school with a sharp focus on improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and rigorous. The outcomes are used effectively to improve their quality. The governing body is led by a very knowledgeable, active and supportive Chair of Governors. Overall governors are supportive of the school. However, many governors are too passive because committees meet irregularly and do not play an active enough role in scrutinising information and holding the school rigorously enough to account.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English to match that in mathematics by:

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- providing pupils with the same level of intensive and effective support as they receive in mathematics
- making sure that that the level of challenge is consistently high, especially for higher-attaining pupils.
- Encourage the more active participation of all governors in supporting the school and holding it to account by making sure that committees meet regularly and report their business on a regular basis and in detail to the full governing body.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to contribute. Pupils work effectively in groups and pairs where they are confident contributors. They listen respectfully to others' ideas. Pupils enjoy working independently. They express themselves orally with clarity and confidence. For example, in one lesson on the topic of bullying, pupils produced excellent 'mini dramas' that stimulated an impressive, cogently-argued debate with minimal input from the teacher. Pupils join Year 3 with broadly average levels of attainment. They make good progress to attain above-average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other groups such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, also make good progress and achieve well because of the outstanding support and guidance they receive.

Pupils say how safe they feel in school. They show a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Participation rates in the wide range of sporting enrichment activities are high. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school. For example, Year 6 pupils are especially proud of being partnered with younger pupils to help them with reading. Pupils value the school council and the school is responsive to their ideas by bringing about improvements, for example, to playground facilities. Pupils are very active in supporting a range of charities both locally and internationally, such as those helping with the Haiti disaster. Pupils demonstrate their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through their good behaviour, their respect for others and their understanding and tolerance for other cultures and religions.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching consistently stimulates pupils' interest and inquisitiveness. It provides mostly good levels of challenge for different groups of pupils, although sometimes the level of challenge in English for higher-attaining pupils is not as high as it could be. Teaching is conducted at good pace. It makes effective use of group and paired work to promote pupils' independent learning. In one English lesson, for example, 'mock' interviews were conducted between pairs of pupils in front of the whole class. These stimulated intense discussion about interviewing techniques and enabled pupils then to conduct increasingly sophisticated interviews with nominated partners. Skilled teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to supporting the learning and progress of pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities. Marking is regular and consistently effective in showing pupils what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum encourages the active participation of pupils in their own learning. Topics are planned in detail to promote pupils' interest. They are planned to be as practical as possible to promote 'hands-on' learning and engage pupils' active involvement. The introduction of lessons in social and emotional aspects of learning adds significantly to pupils' understanding of issues such as bullying, Internet safety and other cultures and religions. There is a good range of enrichment activities in sports and the arts. All pupils in Year 4, for example, learn to play the clarinet. Educational visits are regular and varied.

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Excellent provision for care, guidance and support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are most vulnerable enjoy school and make the best of the opportunities it provides. The school's involvement in the local authority's 'Achievement for All' project is expertly led by the co-ordinator for personal, social and health education. It embeds highly-effective support for lower-attaining pupils and for those who are emotionally vulnerable and their families. Strong links with the nearby infant school and the local secondary school ensure that transition arrangements for the youngest and oldest pupils are of the highest calibre.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are consistent in providing a sharp and effective focus on improvement. Teamwork in pursuit of improvement is strong as a result. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular. The outcomes are used effectively to identify areas for improvement and drive up quality. Despite some undue modesty in key areas, leaders and managers evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately. Forward planning is crisp and pertinent in identifying areas for improvement and how to tackle them. Consequently, attainment is above average and rising year on year. Governors are aware of the need to be more actively involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the school; a more effective committee structure is planned to tackle this relative weakness which will report in detail on their work on a regular basis to the full governing body.

This is an inclusive school in which all pupils are known as individuals. The progress of individuals and different groups of pupils is tracked effectively so that needs are clearly identified and provided for. As a consequence, gaps between different groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are not known to be eligible are closing rapidly. Equal opportunities are promoted well.

The school adopts recommended good practice for all aspects of safeguarding. Checks on adults working with pupils are carried out meticulously. Staff training is regular and appropriate. Risk assessments are comprehensive. The curriculum promotes pupils' good understanding of the importance of personal safety. Proactive links with key agencies such as providers for education programmes on Internet safety and 'stranger danger' reduce the risk of harm to pupils.

The school plans effectively to promote community cohesion. The school itself is a harmonious community. Links with the local community are strong. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to develop their understanding of other religions and cultures. First-hand experiences such as visits to a mosque and 'Indian week' are popular

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with pupils who talk confidently and with understanding about the importance of respect for different cultures. Evaluation of the impact of activities to promote community cohesion is in place, although the school accepts that increased rigour is necessary to provide more evidence of its undoubted impact on community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of questionnaires returned showed that parents and carers are supportive of the school and the quality of education it provides. A small minority of questionnaires showed some concern at the following aspects: how effectively the school keeps parents and carers informed about the progress their children are making; how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour; and how effectively the school takes account of parents' and carers' suggestions and concerns. Inspectors looked closely at these aspects and took account of the most recent school questionnaire sent out to parents and carers at the end of the school year in 2010. This survey showed almost 100% support from parents and carers for all aspects, including those outlined above. Inspectors saw good behaviour in lessons and around school. Pupils also said that behaviour is good and that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly by teaching and support staff. Inspectors were satisfied that regular reports on pupils' progress are sent home to parents, in addition to regular parents' evenings being held. Inspectors were satisfied that procedures are in place to seek the views of parents and carers through, for example, questionnaires. Inspectors think that there is a need, however, for the replies to be discussed in more detail and more systematically by governors.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John's CofE Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 144 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	48	40	49	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	60	31	38	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	33	43	53	9	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	28	52	64	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	38	38	47	5	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	35	44	54	6	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	36	45	56	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	30	49	60	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	35	48	59	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	30	45	56	8	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	27	47	58	8	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	31	38	39	48	3	4	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	44	39	48	3	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John's C of E Junior School, Manchester, M35 9PY

Thank you for your warm and courteous welcome during the recent inspection of your school.

Your school has been judged a good school. Here are some of the reasons why.

- The school provides you with excellent care, guidance and support
- You make good progress and achieve well because the teaching you receive is good
- You get along with each other and the adults working with you very well
- Your attendance is above average – well done!
- You are confident and enjoy learning
- You express yourselves very clearly
- Your school is led and managed well
- Your school prepares you well for the next stages in your education.

In order to make your school even better, I am asking it to do the following things.

- Improve your attainment in English to match that in mathematics by providing you with the intensive and effective support you receive in mathematics and

by making sure that that the level of challenge in lessons is consistently high, especially for those of you who are the fastest learners

- Encourage all governors to be more active in supporting the school and holding it to account.

I am confident you will continue to work hard to help your school go from strength to strength.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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