

St John's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101788
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	355069
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather East
Headteacher	Martina Martin
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 11 lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, parents and carers, staff and pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding policies and other documents. Questionnaires from 97 parents and carers were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Achievement of pupils in science, especially the more able.
- How well boys are being supported in improving writing.
- The impact of the governing body and subject leaders on increasing progress.
- How well relationships support pupils in feeling safe and valued.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has an above-average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have a wide range of needs, including autism, moderate learning and hearing difficulties. The school has received several awards including the Activemark and Healthy School award. The school has agreed with the local authority to open an additional Reception class this year in response to local need. Five new full-time teachers joined the school in September.

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 good school provides pupils with outstanding care, guidance and support, enabling them to feel extremely safe and valued. One pupil spoke for others by saying, 'Whenever you need help, teachers will be there for you.' A strong sense of belonging and community helps pupils from all backgrounds to develop an exceptionally good awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Pupils show respect for each other and are polite and friendly. High rates of attendance demonstrate the pupils' delight in coming to school and they are excellent at staying healthy by eating healthy food and taking exercise.

Children make a good start to their education in the Reception classes. Knowledge and understanding are built on well throughout Years 1 to 6 so that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. While pupils learn quickly in most lessons, there are occasions when teachers talk for too long or do not ensure work is closely matched to the range of needs in each class. When this happens, learning slows slightly. Pupils make best progress in speaking and reading. In science, teachers do not always expect pupils to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills, or provide enough challenge for the more-able pupils in developing investigative skills.

There are good procedures for self-evaluation that enable the inspirational senior leaders to have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done next to improve the school further. The school has worked well to make writing topics more interesting for the boys, and consequently, last year, they made almost the same progress as the girls. Attainment has risen since the last inspection and pupils are learning more quickly. These developments in both the provision and the outcomes for pupils demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers consistently meet pupils' differing needs by not talking for too long in lessons and providing tasks that move the learning of all pupils forward swiftly.
- Increase the quality of pupils' work in science, especially the more-able, by
 - providing good opportunities for pupils to use and develop what they have learnt in literacy and numeracy

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- extending pupils’ investigative skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school and are confident about sharing their ideas. For example, in a good literacy lesson in Year 3, pupils enjoyed comparing similarities and differences between two stories and, in Year 2, pupils were enthusiastic about helping each other to find pairs of numbers to equal 100 or 1,000. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress, with the best progress being made in reading. Older pupils help Reception children by being ‘reading mates’ and this helps to promote an early enjoyment of books.

Pupils’ achievement is good and attainment has been rising since the last inspection in English and mathematics. Attainment is now above average by the time pupils leave the school, with high attainment in speaking and reading. While attainment is also above average in science, pupils do not always do their best writing in their everyday work or demonstrate above-average investigative skills.

Behaviour is good. Pupils are nearly always polite and sensible, although occasionally a few become quietly inattentive when activities provide insufficient challenge. Attendance is high and pupils show their enthusiasm for learning by arriving at school punctually. Pupils’ good literacy and numeracy skills and personal development prepare them well for the next stage of education and later life.

Most pupils say that they feel very safe at school because there is very little unpleasant behaviour. They feel that their strong relationships with members of staff support them well emotionally. They have a very clear understanding about how to stay safe. For example, children in the Reception Year understand why it is a good idea to wear shoes on the walk from class to the hall. Pupils take responsibility well and cooperate with each other sensibly. For example, older pupils are proud that they act as play leaders. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is excellent. They reflect thoughtfully during times of prayer and worship, take part in community events and raise funds for charity. They are respectful of other beliefs and cultures. Pupils enjoy keeping active at playtime and enjoy the healthy salad bar at lunchtime. They enjoy the VIP tickets and ‘healthy hats’ awarded for eating a healthy meal.

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

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

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The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are enthusiastic, have good relationships with the pupils and establish routines well so that lessons run smoothly. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning and engage the pupils' interest, and questions are used well to help to draw pupils into discussions. A variety of interesting activities help pupils to enjoy learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 enjoyed the role play about the 'Jason' story and pupils in Year 6 enjoyed helping each other to edit their writing. Teachers and teaching assistants provide sensitive support for groups and individuals as they work. Occasionally, learning slows when teachers talk for too long or do not fine-tune tasks so that all pupils can make rapid progress. For example, in one numeracy lesson, pupils continued playing a number matching game when it was clear they were ready to move on to harder work. This is especially true for more-able pupils who are not always challenged enough. Marking provides helpful guidance to move learning forward, although pupils are not always given enough time to respond to the advice given.

The curriculum covers core skills effectively and the use of literacy and numeracy is extended well in history and geography topics. This good practice has not yet been fully extended in science. Pupils appreciate the good range of enrichment opportunities including the special weeks, educational visits and clubs. There are good opportunities for pupils to enjoy taking part in physical activities demonstrating why the school has the Activemark and Healthy School award. Intervention strategies provide valuable support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils are cared for, guided and supported exceptionally well, enabling them to feel safe and valued. They appreciate being able to leave a message for 'listening Liz' and will often write further messages to confirm when their difficulties have been resolved. Safety has a high profile in the school in displays and during discussions with pupils. Pupils are known as individuals and feel the strong influence of the school motto and shared set of values. Members of staff meet frequently to discuss any pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning and provide additional support as

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required.

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?

Senior leaders are passionate about the school, and embed ambition and drive improvement well, because they have a thorough knowledge about what the school does well and how it should be improved. There is a strong determination to constantly raise the bar, and attainment and the pace of pupils' progress have been continuing to rise since the last inspection. Senior Leaders have managed the development of a new Reception class smoothly so that both classes are well resourced and can provide a good curriculum both indoors and out. Several subject leaders are new and, while they have clear plans for further improvement, they have not had time to have an impact on provision. The governing body are involved well in the life of the school and understand its strengths and areas for development. They evaluate their own effectiveness, although they are not fully involved at all points of the evaluation and development cycle. Information about pupils' progress is used rigorously to identify and monitor pupils who are falling behind and to take effective action. Leaders promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination consistently. Pupils come to the school from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and all feel welcomed and valued.

At the time of the inspection, the school's safeguarding arrangements were found to be good and most parents and carers agree that pupils are kept safe at school. Parents and carers are positive about the school and typically make comments such as 'the children are always put first'. Pupils with personal difficulties in their lives are supported well. The partnership between the school and external agencies is good, enabling leaders and pupils to benefit from advice and support from various sources. The school has good activities for pupils to learn about life in other countries and the local area, and clear plans to promote community cohesion further by forging links with a contrasting school in the United Kingdom.

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

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children are working within the expected levels when they join the Reception classes. They make good progress and attainment rises to slightly above average when they start in Year 1. Children’s personal development and speaking skills develop especially well because these are prioritised in lessons. For example, when catching bobbing apples outside, children were encouraged to use mathematical language such as ‘less than a minute’ and ‘many’, and children enjoying a traditional tale discussed comparative size. Children behave well and enjoy taking part in tasks chosen by themselves or adults. They are able to resolve minor disagreements over sharing equipment for themselves.

Members of staff work together well, planning and delivering an interesting and varied curriculum. They form good relationships with the children and their parents and carers, and use praise well to encourage, enabling children to settle into school routines quickly and happily. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well so that they can participate in activities. Occasionally, there is a slight drop in pace during whole-class activities when quick finishers need to wait for other children to catch-up. Leaders track the progress of individuals carefully and look at the progress of groups at the end of the year. Leaders have correctly identified that boys make slightly less progress than girls in reading and writing and have clear plans to extend outdoor provision in these areas of learning to inspire boys to become more involved in these activities. They do not use assessment data to check that all groups are doing well throughout the year so that any dips in progress are tackled as soon as they arise.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

There was a good response to the inspection questionnaire. Most parents and carers are pleased with the school, especially that their children enjoy school, behave well and learn to lead a healthy life. The inspection team also found this to be the case. A few parents and carers would like more information on their children’s progress, and feel that individual needs are not always met, or progress good enough. The inspection team found that the school provides good information for parents and carers about pupils’ progress and are always happy to respond to requests for further information. Pupils make good progress over time, although occasionally work is not challenging enough, particularly for more-able pupils in science.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. John's Church of England Primary 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 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	63	33	34	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	56	35	36	6	6	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	27	52	54	11	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	27	48	49	17	18	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	36	47	48	5	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	31	53	55	7	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	42	49	51	3	3	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)	37	38	44	45	4	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	32	44	45	11	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	35	49	51	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	25	51	53	10	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	44	44	45	5	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	55	38	39	4	4	1	1

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



6 October 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of St John's Church of England Primary School, Croydon CR0 5EL

We enjoyed coming to see your happy school. Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. Your school provides you with a good standard of education.

These are the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school and make good progress.
- You are polite and friendly, and mostly listen carefully in lessons.
- It is good that older pupils help as play leaders and reading mates.
- You feel very safe at school, and well done for attending school regularly and keeping healthy.
- We agree with you when you say that teachers are very kind and look after you exceptionally well.
- The headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school better.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next to make it better.

- Help your teachers to always give you work that is just right for you and to make sure that you have the time to get on with your work.
- Make sure that you are given enough chance to use your writing, mathematics and investigation skills in your science work, especially those of you who are quick at learning.

Thank you once again for telling us about your school and letting us see your work. All of you could help your teachers by always listening carefully in class and doing your best work in science.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge
Lead inspector

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