

St John's Primary School

St John's Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 9AG

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has high aspirations for the pupils. Her team of committed staff has worked hard to secure the improvements needed after the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors monitor the school effectively. They have a clear strategic vision to ensure that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes continue to improve.
- The quality of teaching is good. Assessment is effective. In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers have exceptional subject knowledge.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points because work is well matched to their needs. Outcomes in both key stages 1 and 2 are similar to, and sometimes above, the national average.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. It gives pupils many opportunities to extend their learning. Extra-curricular provision is particularly strong.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. British values are well taught. As a result, pupils show respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others.
- Pupils behave well and they are courteous to each other. Personal development is strong. Older pupils enjoy helping those in the younger year groups.
- Middle leaders in English and mathematics are successful in raising standards. Those who are responsible for subjects such as history and geography have not yet had such a positive impact.
- From low starting points, children make good progress in the early years. A similar proportion to the national average achieve a good level of development. Sometimes, work in English and mathematics is not challenging enough to ensure that more children exceed the expected standard.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In the early years, provide work of greater challenge in writing and mathematics so that more children exceed the expected standard.
- Ensure that middle leaders who are responsible for subjects such as history and geography have a greater impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The enthusiastic and dedicated headteacher and assistant headteacher provide strong leadership. They lead a team of committed staff who have worked hard to address the issues raised at the previous inspection.
- Parents and carers are very complimentary about the school. They say that staff are caring and professional. Parents like the fact that staff are always available to talk about any concerns or worries. A typical comment was: 'We are delighted with the school; my child has thrived and progressed well. The school has prepared them well both personally and academically for secondary school.'
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. It makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is designed to give pupils new and exciting opportunities. Parents say the range of activities on offer sparks their children's enthusiasm and makes them curious about learning. Topics are introduced in imaginative ways. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 took part in a stone-age workshop, which pupils found both interesting and informative.
- Creative skills are well developed. In art, pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents with clay, textiles and paint. The painting pupils had done in the style of the impressionist painter Monet was exceptional. There are many opportunities to develop drama and music skills. Recently, pupils have taken part in a production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.
- There is a large range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy many trips and visits. These opportunities give pupils an enthusiasm for learning beyond the classroom. One example of this is the popular forest school.
- British values are well taught. Pupils have a clear understanding about democracy. They respect people from different faiths and cultures.
- Pupils are starting to understand their potential career options. They enjoy taking part in the enterprise project, which develops business skills. Pupils have also considered the personal skills they will need in their future careers.
- Sports has a high priority in the school. There is a regular sports newsletter that celebrates sporting success and keeps parents informed about the forthcoming tournaments. The additional funding for physical education and sport is well used to raise the participation rates of all pupils. Pupils enjoy taking part in taster sessions in sports such as cricket and tennis.
- Senior leaders are effective in monitoring all aspects of the school. For example, they have ensured that pupil premium funding is well used to provide useful support for disadvantaged pupils.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics fulfil their roles effectively. They ensure that pupils in all year groups make good progress. Middle leaders who are responsible for subjects such as history and geography do not yet have a great enough impact on pupils' progress.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong. Governors share the ambitions and aspirations of the headteacher. They ask searching questions of leaders and know how pupils are progressing.
- Governors have a clear strategic vision to continue to improve the school. They have worked hard to put in place the necessary changes after the last inspection. Governors fulfil their roles well. For example, those with specific responsibilities in areas such as the early years are very knowledgeable.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. Parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, said they consider that their children are safe. Staff are diligent in ensuring the well-being of pupils. They know the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They follow the appropriate procedures if they have any concerns. There are good links with a range of external agencies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has much improved since the previous inspection. It is now good across the school. Pupils say one reason they enjoy their learning is because they can see the relevance of the tasks they are given, for example when solving real-life mathematical problems.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are strong. When asked, many pupils said that the best thing about this school was 'the other pupils and teachers'. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching in the school. A typical comment was: 'Teachers work really hard to support the children in everything they do.'
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to support those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They work closely with teachers to make sure that work provided is of the right level so that pupils can make rapid progress.
- All teachers have good subject knowledge. Some, such as in mathematics, have exceptional subject knowledge. In subjects such as English, teachers have strong questioning skills. They challenge pupils to think hard and expand on the answers they give. Teachers provide activities that enable pupils to think scientifically. For example, pupils said how much they enjoyed investigations they made on their own teeth in Year 4.
- The school's assessment procedures monitor accurately pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers and leaders are therefore able to act quickly should they identify any pupil who is falling behind.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Teachers are effective in developing pupils' self-confidence. Pupils are able to try out different activities and discover areas where they excel; for example, in the drama productions, pupils can try acting, singing or backstage activities.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. When using the internet, they know about the possible dangers they may encounter. They know not to give out personal information to strangers. Pupils take part in the junior citizenship scheme at the local fire station. They learn how to stay safe from dangers such as those related to roads, railways and fire.
- School leaders take bullying seriously. Pupils who act as anti-bullying ambassadors have a positive impact on behaviour across the school. Although pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, they say bullying at this school is rare.
- Staff all agree that the school supports pupils well. Residential trips help to develop pupils' independence. There is a strong focus on keeping active. For example, during the key stage 1 circus workshop, pupils were energetically developing their balancing skills.
- Pupils say that the school helps them to learn about the importance of getting along well together. For example, pupils in Year 1 have discussed, and understand, the characteristics of a good friend. Pupils are encouraged to assist one another; for example, those in Year 6 help Reception children at lunchtimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Around the school, pupils are polite and well-mannered. They show responsible attitudes, and conduct themselves well at play and lunchtimes. Those who spoke to inspectors all agreed that behaviour at this school is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They enjoy their learning and listen attentively. Pupils' books are neat and well presented. It is clear that pupils take pride in the work they produce.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs are very popular, providing pupils with a relaxing and enjoyable start and end to their day.
- Attendance at the school is similar to the national average. This year, attendance levels have improved. Rates of persistent absence are very low.
- Parents, staff and governors all agree that pupils at this school are safe, happy and behave well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, this is because the quality of teaching is good. Work provided for pupils typically matches their needs.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check, scores over the last few years have improved gradually. Observations of learning in phonics show that current pupils are making strong progress. They make an effective start to understanding the sounds that letters make. School information for the current Year 1 indicates that the trend of improvement is likely to continue. A greater number of pupils, when compared to previous years, are likely to meet the expected standard.
- In 2017, results in key stage 1 were similar to the national averages. Work in current pupils' books and school data indicates that more pupils will meet and exceed the expected standard this year.
- Key stage 2 results in 2017 were a little above the national averages. School data and work in books show that pupils are continuing to make strong progress. More pupils than last year are likely to meet the expected standard, particularly in reading and writing.
- Most-able pupils do well because work provided is often well matched to their abilities. In 2017, a larger than average number of pupils reached the higher standard in reading, mathematics and science. Most-able pupils are currently making good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' skills are carefully assessed by specialist staff, who provide work that is of the right level for their needs.
- Leaders have worked hard to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress, dealing rapidly with any barriers to learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do well.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and abilities that are below those typically seen, particularly in reading, writing, moving and handling, and their understanding of the world.
- The teaching improves children's skills rapidly. Most make good progress from their starting points. Teachers plan activities that capture children's imagination. By the end of Reception, an average proportion of children, when compared to the national average, have made a good level of development. School information for 2018 indicates that results are likely to be similar to previous years.
- Children's personal development is promoted effectively. They learn to become increasingly confident. For example, children in Reception sometimes lead the whole-school assembly.
- The outside areas have been well planned and provide a stimulating learning environment. Children have the chance to ride around the 'roads' that have been marked on the playground and practise their skills at using a zebra crossing.

- Parents are pleased with the provision. A typical comment was: 'It's lovely to see our child flourish in such a supportive and nurturing environment.' Children play well together and enjoy sharing resources.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. Leaders understand the strengths and those areas where further improvement is needed. For example, leaders understand they need to provide work of greater challenge in writing and mathematics so that more children can exceed the expected standard.

School details

Unique reference number	139762
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10040916

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Neil Carberry
Headteacher	Nicola Hughes
Telephone number	01491 837 305
Website	stjohnswallingford.org.uk
Email address	office.2567@st-johns.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2016

Information about this school

- St John's Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A lower proportion of pupils, when compared to the national average, are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- St John's Primary School converted to become an academy in June 2013. The school works collaboratively with four other primary schools. Together, they have formed the OPEN (Oxfordshire Primary Education Network) Trust. The trust's aim is: 'Working together to provide an outstanding education for all our children.'

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes. They talked to pupils about their work and looked in their books. There were meetings with pupils to ascertain their views of the school. Some pupils in Years 2 and 6 read to inspectors.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions were held with some members of the governing body. There was a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. There was a meeting with two headteachers of the other primary schools who are members of the OPEN Trust.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own check on its performance and the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, information on pupils' progress, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- There were informal discussions with parents at the end of the school day. The views of 82 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. Staff views were gathered through meetings and the 24 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Hilary Goddard

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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