

The James Oglethorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102268
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	355159
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Sach
Headteacher	Deborah Rowles
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, observed 11 teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teaching staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books. They checked documents, including the school improvement plan, systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and school policies. They also analysed information from 139 questionnaires from parents and carers, in addition to those received from staff and pupils.

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

- What the current level of attainment is and whether pupils are making enough progress from their starting points.
- Whether improvements have been made in English, particularly writing.
- Whether the teaching ensures that the more able in each class achieve as well as they can.
- How well the leaders and managers embed ambition amongst the staff and parents and carers and how well they drive through improvement.

Information about the school

The James Oglethorpe is larger than the average-sized primary school. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes. The pupils come from predominantly White British backgrounds, with a very small minority from a variety of other heritages. Relatively few pupils speak English as an additional language. About one in seven pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is below average. Their needs are mostly related to moderate learning difficulties. The school has gained a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools status.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

James Oglethorpe is a satisfactory but rapidly improving school with the best interests of the pupils at the heart of its work. The pupils clearly enjoy their education. The parental and carer questionnaires were extremely positive. One parent, echoing the sentiments of many, wrote, 'For my child to be happy, cared for and valued makes me, as a parent, very positive.' Another remarked, 'Our daughter has had a happy and exciting start to school.'

Until relatively recently, achievement has not been as high as it should have been, considering the starting points of the pupils entering the Reception classes. Historically, attainment has been broadly average and progress satisfactory. Too few pupils reached the higher levels of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although teacher assessments for Year 6 in 2010 continued in the same vein, the emerging impact of the decisive actions taken by leaders and managers to bring about improvement can be seen clearly in the current Years 5 and 6. Attainment is rising and progress is rapidly accelerating. This is because the leaders at all levels are highly committed to improving the outcomes for the pupils. The good leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher ensures that the vision for the future of the school is successfully embedded amongst all staff, governors and parents and carers. They demonstrate high levels of professionalism through leading by example. Since the previous inspection, the pupils are making more consistent progress across year groups in mathematics. This is because the monitoring process employed by the senior leaders is far more rigorous and effective. Marking has also improved and gives clear pointers as to how the pupils may reach the next level of attainment. This is clear evidence of the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Satisfactory and swiftly improving teaching ensures that more pupils are currently making good progress in English and mathematics than in the past. However, there is not always enough opportunity for the pupils to practise their problem-solving skills through open-ended investigation in mathematics, or to share ideas, think about them and talk them through during writing lessons in English. The teachers are beginning to use more probing questions in lessons which ensure that the most able develop their thinking skills, but this is not a common feature in all lessons. In addition, some teachers do not re-shape tasks for the more able when the work planned for them is not challenging enough. Members of staff are held to account rigorously for the work that they do, through regular progress meetings. The leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and take an individualised approach to improving each teacher's practice. The pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop and apply their basic skills across the curriculum and to develop team-working through residential visits.

The effectiveness of governance is satisfactory and the support the governing body provides for the school is effective. However, the questions it asks of the school are often

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reactive. It does not gather its own evidence independently enough to hold the leaders to account as rigorously as it could.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - a greater proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2 and Level 5 by the end of Year 6
 - pupils have more opportunity to share, reflect and discuss in preparation for writing tasks
 - there is a clear emphasis on developing pupils' problem-solving skills through more frequent and well-focused opportunities to tackle open-ended tasks in mathematics.
- Build upon the work already started to move the remaining satisfactory teaching to good or better by:
 - ensuring teachers re-shape tasks during lessons in order to challenge the more able in their class effectively
 - developing teachers' higher-order questioning skills.
- Increase the impact of the governing body on school improvement by ensuring that it gathers its own first-hand evidence in order to challenge the school more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Good attitudes to learning dominate classrooms in which the pupils are diligent and hardworking. Their behaviour is good. They are keen to answer questions and to participate in discussion. In a good mathematics lesson, the pupils were provided with many opportunities to articulate their reasoning and make hypotheses. Such opportunities enabled them to understand resulting patterns when investigating consecutive numbers and resulted in good learning. However, such practice is not always the case and, in a small number of lessons, pupils' progress was not as good as it could have been. Sometimes this was because the work planned was not adjusted during lessons to meet the needs of the more able in the class. At other times, the pupils were sometimes kept sitting on the carpet for long periods and, as a result, a few lost their concentration. The performance of girls and boys is similar over time and the pupils with moderate learning difficulties make similar progress to their classmates.

The pupils feel safe because they say that the school listens effectively to their concerns. They gain a good understanding of healthy lifestyles through effective science and personal, social and health education lessons. This understanding reflects work carried out to gain the Healthy Schools Award. A wide variety of opportunities to take on extra responsibilities such as councillors and play-leaders ensures that the pupils contribute well to the community. Preparation for the next stage of education is good, supported by the pupils' above average attendance. The pupils clearly know right from wrong and demonstrate a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. . An

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example of this was the significant impact of the 60th anniversary celebrations during the inspection.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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?

The quality of teaching, including the use of assessment, is satisfactory, but rapidly improving. It is successfully tackling some previous underachievement which developed at a time when staffing was less stable. Cross-curricular approaches to teaching are particularly effective, as was seen in some good mathematics lessons. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils solved a murder mystery and represented their findings on line-graphs using a computer program. The theme of the lessons was highly engaging and provided good opportunities to use information and communication technology. It also made links between science and physical education and ensured that the pupils understood the connection between exercise and fitness. The pupils learnt how to sift through information before interpreting what it meant. They were then encouraged to talk through their ideas and formulate hypotheses. In some lessons, the pupils spend too long listening to teacher-talk and sometimes lose concentration. In others, the more able are not given more challenging work of which they are capable.

The good curriculum provides a wide range of experiences and opportunities for the pupils. It contributes well to the outcomes for pupils. The school is developing a better

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creative element aimed at improving pupils' thinking skills. The pupils enjoy the range of after-school clubs and activities and the trips and the school. visits organised b

Good care, guidance and support ensure that the pupils are well cared for and feel supported. The pupils most in need are identified and supported appropriately by teaching assistants and effective plans are put in place to ensure that their individual needs are met. One parent/carer wrote, 'The school has supported my son's special needs throughout his entire time there, showing enlightenment and great care in their approach to teaching him.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The committed and industrious work of the senior leaders has introduced the necessary initiatives to accelerate progress and raise attainment. Already, there are signs of impact shown in the teacher assessments of pupils' progress in most year groups. The parental/carer questionnaires showed a high degree of satisfaction with the way in which the school is led and managed. The large majority feel that the school listens to and acts upon their views and concerns. The phase and subject leaders are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work through a scrutiny of pupils' work and observing teaching. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and forms a good basis on which to move the school forward.

The governing body wants the pupils to achieve as well as possible and shares the headteacher's vision, but sometimes it relies on information supplied to it instead of seeking out its own. This reliance results in questioning being reactive rather than proactive. As a result, its role as a critical friend is still developing. Community cohesion is in the early stages of development. There has been some initial analysis and an action plan has been written, but the school has yet to engage with the wider United Kingdom community. There are a good number of positive links with other establishments which benefit the pupils and contribute to their well-being. There is no discrimination and all groups of pupils are provided with whatever support is necessary for them to succeed. Outcomes for pupils indicate that all groups achieve equally well, notwithstanding the lack of challenge experienced by some more-able pupils in lessons. The school ensures that the health, safety and care of the pupils most in need have high priority. Safeguarding policies and procedures are exemplary and are monitored robustly. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that the school keeps their child safe.

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in the Reception classes, their skills levels are broadly similar to those typical for their age. They begin to make good progress quickly as a result of well-organised systems in place to help them settle into school. Positive links with parents and carers ensure that valuable information which facilitates good care and support is freely communicated. The children are provided with good opportunities to develop their early writing and counting skills. This is because the planning of activities takes into account the individual strengths of each child. Daily observations underpin planning and good independent work ensures that the children build on their prior learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They behave well because the adults encourage the children to understand what is acceptable and what is not. Careful attention is given to ensuring that the children learn in a safe and secure environment.

The children's good progress reflects good leadership and management. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good balance of opportunities for the children to learn both independently and under the direct guidance of adults. The children learn to persevere and concentrate for extended periods of time, for example when drawing, cutting and sticking. Good opportunities are provided to develop creativity, such as making characters from 'The Three Little Pigs' out of a variety of resources and materials. However, the outdoor provision requires improvement as the children's activities are not sufficiently well structured to facilitate spontaneous play.

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

Views of parents and carers

Although a minority of parents and carers returned the questionnaires, most were very positive about the school overall. All parents and carers felt that the school kept their children safe. The overwhelming majority said that their children enjoyed school and stated that they were happy with the experience their children have in the school. Just over a quarter of parents and carers made additional comments. Some write of the particularly good start their children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Others commented about the good partnership working of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Most feel that the school is well led and managed. The inspection evidence supports this view. A few feel that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. The inspectors found behaviour to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The James Oglethorpe 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 306 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	68	43	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	100	72	39	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	42	68	49	7	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	45	73	53	2	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	65	47	71	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	66	47	69	50	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	43	76	55	3	2	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)	58	42	69	50	2	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	47	69	50	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	30	76	55	11	8	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	32	83	60	7	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	65	47	62	45	9	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	62	50	36	2	1	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	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.



25 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The James Oglethorpe Primary School, Upminster RM14 3NB

Thank you very much for the genuine welcome we received when we came to inspect your school recently. You impressed us with your good manners and polite behaviour. This is highly commendable; well done! You have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy, you attend school well and carry out duties in school enthusiastically. You told us that you enjoy school and that there are lots of clubs to attend and visits to go on. Your progress is satisfactory, but this is getting better all the time.

Your teachers make your lessons interesting. They work hard planning lessons and make lots of links between different subjects to ensure that your lessons are enjoyable. We think that the teaching is satisfactory and improving quickly. All the adults in your school care for you really well. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher do a good job and are keen that you all do as well as you can. We think your school gives you a satisfactory, but improving education. So that your school moves quickly towards being a better school, we have asked your headteacher to ensure that a number of things happen. These are that:

- you make more rapid progress so that you achieve higher results in English and mathematics by the time you leave James Oglethorpe ? you can help with this by always working hard and doing your best work.
- your teachers continue to make improvements to their teaching by asking harder questions of the more able children and changing activities in lessons if they are too easy.
- the governing body asks more questions of the headteacher about the school from information they have gathered for themselves.

We wish you all the best in the future at James Oglethorpe Primary.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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