

St James' Church of England Aided Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112922
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	357222
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Ault
Headteacher	Ian Bell (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons and saw eleven teachers. Meetings were held with groups of staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including pupils' work, minutes of governing body meetings, the school development plan, progress monitoring records and school policies. The responses to 60 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do current rates of progress support the view that progress is at least satisfactory for all groups of pupils?
- How effective are teachers in involving pupils in their own learning?
- What are the key strengths of the school that enable pupils who join the school with little knowledge of the English language to make at least satisfactory progress?

Information about the school

St James' Church of England Junior School is a larger than average inner city junior school. Most pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly of Pakistani heritage. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than normally found in similar schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The school has an above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which cover a broad spectrum. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status. The school is part of a federation with two nearby infant and nursery 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St James' Church of England Junior school provides a satisfactory education. It is moving forward securely as part of the federation arrangements. The self-evaluation documents show that the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Leaders have a focus on raising attainment levels within a caring and supportive environment. A common approach to safeguarding has been adopted across the three schools and all aspects of safeguarding are outstanding. This contributes to good care, guidance and support for pupils throughout the school. Effective partnership arrangements, including support from the local authority, ensure pupils all get the support they need. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are appropriately supported by teaching assistants in class and specialist support from external agencies. Those who speak English as an additional language, especially those who join the school after the start of Year 3, benefit from specialist support within the school by small group sessions.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as demonstrated by good behaviour and the good contribution pupils make to the school and the wider community. Pupils say they feel safe in school but several said they did not always feel so safe outside school. They have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and there is a good uptake for the wide range of clubs and activities. While pupils say they enjoy school some pupils have poor attendance records.

Leaders and managers have enabled teachers to improve their skills so that more lessons are now good. In these lessons, pupils make good progress and in all lessons progress is at least satisfactory. Although teachers are becoming more confident in using assessment data to plan lessons they do not always involve pupils in assessing their own progress. The marking of pupils' work does not always ensure that pupils are given guidance on how to improve their work and that this advice is followed up. The improvements seen during a monitoring visit in 2010 have continued and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is rising with pupils' attainment levels last year close to the national average. Since the last inspection, several areas of pupils' personal development as well as the curriculum and care, guidance and support have improved from satisfactory to good. While the full impact of actions taken by leaders to raise standards is not yet evident, the improvements in teaching and progress are based on steady and secure procedures indicating that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Parents and carers have a satisfactory view of the school but comments made by some of them indicate that they are not fully aware of how the federation operates.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring pupils are consistently involved in assessing their own work
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work always identifies how to get to the next step in their learning and that teachers' comments are always followed up.
- Improve systems to inform parents and carers of how the federation operates and how this affects the communication routes available to them by 1 May 2011.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The initial assessment of pupils' abilities carried out when they join the school shows that attainment is well below average. For several years, the attainment at the end of Year 6 had been low, reflecting satisfactory progress. In 2010, standards rose to be close to the national average and school data show that this rise is being sustained. Progress is improving quickly as a result of an increased proportion of good teaching as teachers make better use of assessment data to set appropriate work. However, this is not yet reflected in improved results over a sustained period. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support from teaching assistants which enables them to develop independence and make similar progress to that of other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language make good progress in developing their language skills during periods when they are taught separately by specialist staff, so that they are then able to progress at the same rates as their classmates. There are no significant differences between the progress made by any groups of pupils.

Pupils say they enjoy lessons and this was clearly seen in a Year 5 science lesson where they investigated how properties changed state and had the opportunity to develop their own investigational techniques. Pupils say that a small number of pupils present some challenging behaviour which is dealt with well by adults. Behaviour in lessons is good because teachers have effective behaviour management systems. In the good lessons, pupils are encouraged to behave by being fully involved in topics that interest them. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 English lesson where the teacher used a story about his own childhood to illustrate how effective a 'flashback' can be.

Relationships throughout the school are good and this contributes to the strong, positive ethos within the school. All the adults in the school set good role models for pupils and the school operates as a harmonious community. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the operation of the school such as by being members of the school council and by helping with collective worship. They also contribute to the local community by singing at local retirement homes and at churches. They are actively involved in fund raising for a Kenyan school and world disaster appeals.

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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	4
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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 teaching staff have a range of experience and through a planned system of lesson observations are able to share best practices. Since the last inspection, the proportion of good teaching has increased and inadequate teaching has been eliminated. Teachers use assessment systems satisfactorily to ensure that the work they set is matched to pupils' abilities with appropriate provision for both the more able and the less able pupils. Systems to involve pupils in assessing their own progress are at an early stage of development. The use of target setting and the identification of levels of attainment are variable. Teachers and teaching assistants work as effective teams within the classroom.

The curriculum ensures that lessons are interesting through links between subjects within a topic based approach. Opportunities for pupils to use their English, mathematics and information and communication technology skills in other subjects are well developed. Developments to ensure continuity with the two infant schools within the federation are already having a positive effect as pupils are well prepared for a smooth transition into Year 3 work. The curriculum supports the development of pupils' personal skills well and contributes to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The needs of all groups of pupils including those who speak English as an additional language are met well. The enrichment opportunities for pupils through the wide range of well supported clubs and activities are excellent. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their residential trip to the activity centre at Edale where they met pupils from a totally different

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background from their own. All the activities during the day are well supervised to ensure pupils' safety and provision for first aid is good. Through the federation links, the arrangements for pupils joining the school from the infant schools are excellent. Two specially trained members of staff provide good support to pupils who are at an early stage of speaking English during small group activities each morning. Pupils transfer to a wide range of secondary schools and receive good help from the school in preparation for the transfer.

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?

Systems are securely in place to move the school forward. However, there has been insufficient time for these to become fully embedded and for their impact to have been evident over a sustained period. Teaching has improved quickly in some classes but has been slower to respond in others. The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement, including in teaching and learning, is therefore satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is recently formed and is responsible for all three schools within the federation. It is strongly led and members are very active in participating in regular committee meetings.

There is no discrimination within the school and every pupil has the same opportunities within class and other school activities. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is satisfactory because there are no significant variations in the levels of the various groups of pupils but attainment is low though rising. Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding, exemplified by excellent security arrangements around the school site and within the buildings. There is a high priority given to health and safety with a comprehensive range of risk assessments. All procedures for ensuring safer recruitment are in place and records are well maintained. Pupils who are in vulnerable circumstances are always well supported and appropriate actions are swiftly taken to ensure their well-being. Leaders and managers are extremely proactive in working with external agencies to support pupils. Community cohesion is good and is based on a comprehensive initial audit. Its effectiveness is monitored through a detailed action plan. Several links with other schools are in place both locally and nationally enabling pupils to meet and communicate with pupils from different backgrounds. There are some links in place with more distant communities.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers completed questionnaires. There were sizeable disagreements with several areas but there were few explanations as to why parents and carers had concerns. Where there were explanations they showed that parents and carers had not been made fully aware of how the federation arrangements affected the roles of leaders and the opportunities parents and carers would have to talk to leaders including members of the governing body. All the views were considered as part of the inspection process. The very few written comments made by parents and carers were followed up anonymously as part of the inspection but they did not follow any pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St James' Church of England Aided 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 insert 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 273 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	50	25	42	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	43	27	45	6	10	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	45	25	42	5	8	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	32	33	55	4	7	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	23	38	28	47	4	7	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	33	31	52	6	10	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	35	30	50	4	7	1	2
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)	16	27	31	52	9	15	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	23	36	60	7	12	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	27	29	48	7	12	6	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	20	30	50	9	15	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	16	27	31	52	4	7	5	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	40	27	45	7	11	2	3

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 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James' Church of England Aided Junior School, Derby, DE23 8FQ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at the work you do. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education.

There are many things we admire about your school and these are a few of them.

You tell us that you feel really safe in the school and that you know who to talk to if you are worried.

You make a good contribution to the school community by taking on responsibilities such as being school councillors and helping with worship.

You say that you enjoy most lessons and that teachers always mark your work.

There are many after school clubs and activities which a large number of you attend.

The school makes sure that you gain a good understanding of how other people live in different parts of the world.

Most of you behave well and you say that any bullying is always dealt with.

These are things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- give you more opportunities to assess your own progress during lessons
- ensure teachers always mark your work and tell you how to improve and check that you take their advice
- ensure your parents and carers are told how the new federation of school works and are aware of who they should contact if they need to.

All of you can help by carrying on working hard.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead inspector

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