

James Wolfe Primary School and Centre for the Deaf

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131246
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	381321
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2012
Lead inspector	John Anthony

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Stapleton
Headteacher	Nicola Deane
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 May 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Anthony	Additional inspector
Paula Protherough	Additional inspector
Avtar Sherri	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons taught by 15 teachers. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils, and met informally with parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at strategic and curriculum planning, records of pupils' progress, school documentation and monitoring records of teaching and learning. Inspectors analysed 138 parents' and carers' questionnaire returns, as well as 23 from staff and 97 from pupils.

Information about the school

James Wolfe Primary School is much larger than the average primary school. During the absence of the headteacher, the school is being led by an executive headteacher who shares her time equally with another local primary school. The school includes the Centre for the Deaf, which makes provision for up to 23 deaf children.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Approximately half the school are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has been steadily increasing, and is above average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is below average overall. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well above the national average; these include pupils with specific learning difficulties, speech, language and communication issues, as well as some with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school holds the Healthy Schools award. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is very caring and pastoral support is strong. The school is not good because teaching, pupil achievement and provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory.
- Achievement is satisfactory and standards at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics are broadly average. Attainment dipped in 2011 and although pupils made adequate progress in mathematics, progress in English declined, particularly in writing. The school has taken robust steps to ensure that pupils currently in the school make better progress and inspection evidence shows that progress overall is satisfactory. While children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall, the provision is not consistent in all classes in developing their literacy and numeracy skills well. Provision for deaf pupils is excellent and consequently they make good progress.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and good relationships exist between adults and pupils. Staff have a strong sense of responsibility for the well-being of pupils in the school, providing good additional and pastoral support for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Although performance management has improved teaching, there are still inconsistencies in the level of challenge matched to pupils' abilities, and in the quality of guidance offered to pupils to improve their learning. Behaviour is satisfactory, and pupils are provided with a secure and safe environment. The school is well resourced and maintained.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders have tackled the key issues from the previous inspection: the writing skills of more-able pupils are improving, and pupils have been given more opportunities to understand and engage with their learning.

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?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be good or better by January 2013, focusing particularly on:
 - increasing flexibility in lesson planning to meet the differing needs and interests of pupils, and introducing activities which raise pupils' aspirations
 - providing more detailed guidance in marking so that pupils know what they have to do to improve, and ensuring that pupils respond.
- Improve attainment in writing by:
 - ensuring that teachers insist on better presentation
 - encouraging correct spelling, punctuation and sentence structure through tighter and more consistent marking.
- Improve provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - adopting a more structured and systematic approach to developing the early learning goals, especially in communication, literacy and language and numeracy skills, on a daily basis
 - identifying children's abilities and potential earlier, in particular the differing early stages of language acquisition of pupils with English as an additional language, and using data more methodically to direct teaching towards meeting the needs of all children.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enter the school with skill levels that are below those expected for their age. Children make good progress through the Nursery year due to a very well organised indoor and outdoor learning environment which promotes all aspects of the early learning goals. However, this momentum slows down in the Reception year due to less well organised curriculum planning and less challenging activities, particularly in the development of children's early communication and numeracy skills. In addition, data are not always used to best effect to plan activities matched to the needs of children, including those at an early stage of acquiring English. Thus children make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stages 1 and 2, with good progress in reading at Key Stage 2. By the time pupils get to Year 6, attainment is broadly average in both English and mathematics. Achievement is therefore satisfactory overall.

Current pupils' learning and progress, as reflected in school tracking data, in their work in books, and as seen during lessons, are satisfactory and improving. Most parents and carers agree that their children's progress is satisfactory. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language, and those from Black African and Caribbean heritages currently make satisfactory progress overall and better when teaching is challenging. Due to the highly focused support for deaf children they continue to make good, and sometimes excellent, progress.

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The school has addressed the issue raised in the previous inspection to raise standards for all learners by improving the use of assessment data in Key Stages 1 and 2, and setting more precise targets for pupils. However, the slightly better performance at Key Stage 2 in mathematics in 2011 was not matched by similar progress in English. As a result, the school carefully analysed pupils' performance in the end of Year 6 tests. This showed pupils' writing was not as strong as reading, especially in the longer writing section. This analysis was supported by evidence found during the inspection where the quality of pupils' reading is often of a higher standard. A more creative style of writing is being implemented, sometimes at the expense of pupils' presentation, style and spelling. This has been recognised by the school's leadership and forms part of the current drive to improve standards in English generally.

Many pupils in the school are articulate and grow in confidence as they progress through the school. When younger readers read to inspectors, their phonetic (letters and the sounds they make) skills were not consistently secure, and sometimes key words were not recognised and checked. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is average but improves through Years 3 to 6 where skills are systematically developed. By Year 6, pupils are generally competent readers for their age and standards of reading are above average.

Pupils' attainment in mathematics is improving. For example, in a well planned and delivered Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were learning to interpret and present data as a bar chart, the teacher based their learning firmly on the success criteria, while helping them to develop skills in working together. Because they responded quickly to the teacher's instructions and helped each other, pupils quickly identified the significance of the number sequences, and developed a good level of competence in applying their knowledge. They, therefore, made good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching overall is satisfactory. Most parents and carers feel that their children are taught well. However, the quality of teaching varies across the school; nearly half of the teaching seen by inspectors was found to be good or better, but a very small minority of teaching was assessed as providing insufficient pace and challenge for pupils. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions show this is representative of the quality of teaching over time.

Measures put in place to improve teaching are having satisfactory impact and are leading to the better progress currently evident in the school. For example, in a good numeracy lesson, crisp and lively questioning kept pupils' attention, and enabled the pupils to develop their understanding quickly, to work independently and make good progress. Outstanding teaching, in a literacy session for a small group of deaf pupils, fully engaged them constantly through energetic dialogue which stimulated real excitement in their learning and, as a result, lead to excellent achievement. This, together with a curriculum which encourages creativity, particularly through art and

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music, helps to foster pupils' satisfactory social, moral, cultural and spiritual development, eloquently expressed in one pupil's letter to Mr Shackleton. 'I'm really devastated that one of your crew members has died, but don't worry, always think positive.'

Less successful teaching, usually through lack of clarity or challenge, was accompanied by inattentiveness, which resulted in some low-level disruption and consequently reduced learning and progress. Where teaching encouraged the pupils to generate their own ideas, the pace of learning was demonstrably quicker and pupils made better progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, work is not always matched accurately for children who have English as an additional language. This is because their language levels are not assessed quickly enough.

Although the planned curriculum is being increasingly used to develop pupils' numeracy and literacy skills across all subject areas, it does not always focus sufficient attention on improving presentation, grammar and spelling skills. Feedback does not always make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff provide a good balance of adult-led and activities that children choose for themselves. However, children's communication, literacy and language and numeracy skills are not consistently developed in all lessons on a daily basis so that early learning goals are always met.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour of pupils is satisfactory. This is in line with the school's own assessment. Although in many instances behaviour is good, and, at times, exemplary, good behaviour is not consistently manifested in all lessons which, in turn, slows progress in learning. This occasional low-level disruption affects the pace of lessons and demonstrates that learning is on occasions too reliant on guidance rather than the inherent desire of all pupils to learn.

Relationships between pupils and staff are friendly, and pupils are usually courteous to each other and to visitors. Most parents and carers expressed the view that behaviour overall is good, but only a small minority was of the view that behaviour in lessons was always good. Pupils said that behaviour is usually, but not always, good. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and say that although there is some occasional bullying, mainly name calling, it is always dealt with appropriately and swiftly. The inspection team found pupils' behaviour around the school, and in the classroom, to be generally orderly and considerate. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers responded in the questionnaire that their children feel safe, and most pupils agreed, although two parents highlighted specific concerns which have been raised with the school and which are being investigated.

Pupils' attendance rates are average, and pupils show a responsible attitude towards their education by being punctual on arrival at school and when moving between lessons and other activities.

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Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory, having taken appropriate steps to satisfactorily address the areas for improvement outlined in the previous inspection report. Parents and carers agree, in the words of one, 'The last Ofsted raised a number of questions about the school which the school addressed in organised meetings. The school has listened and reacted.'

During the past year, middle leaders and temporary senior leaders have shown commitment to maintaining the process of improvement during the absence of the headteacher. They have been supported by a challenging governing body which takes a keen interest in the development of the school. Governors are well informed and ably led. The leadership team has recently been bolstered by the appointment of an executive headteacher who has very quickly instigated reforms that are showing immediate impact on further improving the quality of teaching and the raising of expectations.

The curriculum contributes effectively to pupils' personal development and is directed towards raising attainment in English and mathematics. It provides pupils with opportunities for enrichment through a variety of extra-curricular activities, and promotes satisfactorily pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The school is inclusive. Its impact on pupils' outcomes is only satisfactory because of the differing rates of progress. Leaders and staff ensure, however, that all pupils enjoy equal opportunities for engagement in all aspects of school life, and providing dedicated support for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The Centre for the Deaf is an excellent resource, providing tailored support which helps the pupils to accelerate their learning at a fast pace.

Teachers feel that their professional development is well coordinated and provides them with the guidance that they need to improve. Governors and leaders ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Capacity to improve is demonstrated in the school's accurate self-evaluation, the progress made to date in addressing points for improvement set in the previous inspection report, and the setting of a clear and accurate agenda to raise the quality of teaching further.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



7 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of James Wolfe Primary School and Centre for the Deaf, London SE10 9LA

Thank you very much for welcoming my colleagues and me to your school. On behalf of the team, I would like to thank those of you who met with us to tell us all about the many different things that you do. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. These are some of the things that stand out.

- You are responsible, friendly and kind to each other, and although most of you behave satisfactorily, you think your behaviour could improve more.
- You want to work hard, but do not always get the help and guidance you need to make really good progress in your lessons.
- You tell us that you feel safe in the school and if any bullying occurs it is dealt with quickly.
- All those who lead and manage your school look after you very well

We have asked your headteacher, staff and members of the governing body to do the following to make your school even better:

- ensure that all the teaching in the school is at least good
- ask your teachers to help you to make better progress in writing, by providing you with more detailed guidance on how to improve your spelling and presentation
- assess your abilities more accurately, so that they provide more challenging and suitable activities in lessons to help you to learn better
- make sure that children's learning and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good.

Again, thank you for your kind welcome and for your friendly and very interesting conversations with us.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Anthony
Lead inspector

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