

St James' Church of England Aided Junior School

Reginald Street, , Derby, DE23 8FQ

Inspection dates 15 – 16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- In 2012, the standards reached by the pupils who had been all through the school were broadly in line with the national average. This represents good progress from their starting points.
- Current pupils are making progress consistently well above the nationally expected rates in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those at an early stage of learning English, and those entitled to the pupil premium, make good progress due to the quality of the support they receive.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning, which they can talk about very maturely.
- Teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work. They ensure their lessons have a clear purpose. The brisk pace of learning and teachers' good questioning ensure pupils are fully involved. Many of the teaching assistants offer high-quality support for pupils.
- The executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide excellent leadership and there is a clear and uncompromising focus on improving teaching, achievement and standards.
- The governing body manages the federation effectively and is rapidly improving its ability to hold the school to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is not sufficiently developed so that pupils' progress is monitored and progress tracked.
- Standards in writing remain below those in the other subjects because teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to write in
- At times, teachers spend too long explaining and showing pupils what is expected and not leaving enough time for them to complete the activities.
- Pupils do not always respond to the marking of their work in all classes.

different styles and for different purposes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, governors, pupils, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were considered. Some pupils read books with the inspectors.
- The inspectors analysed and took account of the 18 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and of the 47 responses to the school's own survey of parents' and carers' views.
- In addition, 20 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspectors looked at key inspection documents, including performance data on pupils' progress and attainment produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, self-evaluation work, reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Palmer

Additional Inspector

Amanda Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St James' Junior School is larger than the average primary school. It is part of a federation with two local infant schools, which are inspected and reported on separately.
- The schools share the same governing body and two executive headteachers. The two executive headteachers and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high. Although the majority are of Pakistani heritage, there is a wide range of backgrounds, including Gypsy/Roma, and 29 different languages are spoken. Many of those who join the school are at a very early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal is well above that typically found.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well-above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well-below average.
- A high proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, additional funding which, in this school, applies only to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- Learning mentors, helped by parent volunteers manage a breakfast club at St James' which caters for all schools in the federation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more of the teaching outstanding and raise pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers give pupils time to respond to the marking and feedback that tells them what they need to do to improve
 - providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills to write at length in different styles and for different purposes
 - ensuring a good balance between the time when teachers are speaking to the whole class and the time pupils have to complete tasks.
- Improve the leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics so that pupils' progress is more closely tracked and monitored so that action can be taken if any underachievement is identified.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils start in Year 3 with levels of knowledge and understanding below – often considerably below – the levels expected nationally for their age. In addition, a significant number join the school at times other than normal, often directly from abroad and with little or no understanding of the English language. The school adapts its work well to address the needs of all pupils and, although attainment at the end of Year 6 remains below average, it is improving rapidly. The gap between the school's level of performance and what is typical nationally is narrowing.
- The school's support for pupils at an early stage of learning English is very effective and these pupils make consistently impressive progress. Pupils in 2012 who joined late in the key stage also made good progress from their arrival in the school, but were unable to reach the national levels expected in the time available. Current pupils who have entered the school directly from abroad are making exceptionally rapid progress, especially in Years 3 and 6, including those of Pakistani heritage.
- The federation has supported the rising standards and more rapid progress by ensuring better communication between schools. Staff responsibilities are devolved more widely and ensuring more consistently good teaching and learning. The transition between the infant and junior schools is handled more effectively so pupils settle more quickly and understand what is expected of them.
- The current Year 6 pupils are making progress that is significantly better than that expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, in one lesson pupils made outstanding progress towards developing an understanding of writing in a specific style and to use appropriate language for the purpose. However, across the school, writing standards often remain below those in reading and mathematics, partly because pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their basic skills in writing at length in different styles and for different purposes. Teachers do not always take the opportunity to improve writing skills when working in other subjects.
- In mathematics, progress is rapidly improving due to the development of a new calculation policy which ensures more consistent teaching across the school. In a successful lesson in Year 3, pupils learned to recognise three-dimensional shapes from the 'nets' they had drawn. They made good progress because the teacher focused the learning on the use of the correct vocabulary.
- Good examples of the use of speaking and listening skills to help develop pupils' vocabulary and speech are evident. For example, in Year 5, pupils competently discussed and role-played scenes from a film to help develop their understanding of how an atmosphere is created. Reading skills are well developed through focused teaching and Year 3 pupils are able to read new words accurately using a variety of methods including the linking of sounds and letters (phonics).
- The 2012 national test results show that pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium attained standards that were in line with the other pupils in English and about a year ahead in mathematics and a term ahead in writing. This is a smaller gap than is found nationally and it is being rapidly closed through the positive use of the available extra funding. The pupils entitled to the pupil premium in Year 6 are currently making progress that is better than that of their classmates.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are very well supported. Where there are marked differences in the progress and achievement of different groups of pupils, including some of those from minority ethnic backgrounds, this is due to the time they have been in the school, rather than a result of the teaching.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has made effective use of further training in, for example, using and applying mathematics and improving learning through talk, and this has led to more rapid progress in these areas.
- A major strength of the teaching is the focus on learning and recognising the learning that takes place in every lesson at an individual-pupil level. For example, most lessons begin with pupils noting for themselves what they already know and these notes are returned to at the end of the lesson for them to assess how much more they have learned. Pupils are able to talk maturely and knowledgably about the business of learning.
- The marking of pupils' work, and the provision of feedback to them on how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, are often exceptionally good and very detailed. However, the opportunities for pupils to respond to this guidance, through following up the next steps suggested, are inconsistent across the school. Teachers' target setting in literacy and numeracy for each pupil is very detailed and clearly supports pupils' learning, making it clear in their books what they need to do to reach the next level.
- Teaching assistants often provide very effective support to teachers and pupils, particularly when working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those at an early stage of learning English. In one successful Year 4 lesson, a bilingual teacher provided effective support to help a group of pupils take a full part in learning about electricity.
- Teachers often plan activities that are supported by a stimulating range of resources, such as film and new technology, to ensure that pupils are interested and enjoy their work. However, there are times when the teachers take too long explaining and showing pupils what is expected, so too little time is available for the pupils' activity. There are missed opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different styles or for different purposes. This means they do not put their improving skills into practice often enough.
- The teaching of the most vulnerable pupils, especially those newly arrived in the country, is well supported by the learning mentors and the 'Learning Zone'. The stimulating environment created acts as a resource to encourage pupils to be independent learners.
- The school has an unusually high proportion of newly or recently qualified teachers. However, the support for these staff, through training and advice, has a very positive impact on their teaching skills. The training devised and implemented by the school is used as an example of good practice by other schools who make use of some of the training provided. Staff are very positive about the school and all say they are proud to work there.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Teachers manage pupils well, and establish strong and positive relationships with them when they start in the school. Good relationships among teachers and pupils are helped by the close

links between the three schools in the federation. The positive relationships support pupils' attitudes to school and learning. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, inclusive strategies, such as sharing ideas between pupils, ensured they are engaged all of the time.

- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They are very polite and considerate to others, including visitors. A clear system of rewards and sanctions ensures that any issues that may arise are quickly dealt with in a positive way. Even so, a small proportion of the pupils exhibit behaviour which, occasionally, disrupts others' learning.
- Attendance has improved in recent years. Currently, it is broadly average when compared with similar schools. The learning mentors provide very strong support for a number of families to help boost their attendance and punctuality. The school tracks attendance in detail and continually promotes the need for full attendance, although it is affected by families taking extended visits abroad.
- The before-school club is well organised and run. Breakfast is provided for a number of pupils across the federation. This helps infant pupils have an early experience of the junior school. Relationships are strong, a good variety of activities are provided and pupils have a calm and positive start to the school day.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, and this is supported by the views of most parents and carers and by inspection findings. Pupils say that there is no significant bullying, but are confident that if any did occur it would be dealt with well by the staff. They are very knowledgeable about different types of bullying, especially regarding new technology. Pupils say they trust the adults and would share any concerns or worries with them.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school very effectively. They provide clear vision and sense of purpose to the school that all pupils should be helped to achieve as well as they can. Detailed development planning provides the school with a precise set of targets for further improvement.
 - Most staff know what contribution is expected of them and work well together as a team. Responsibilities are divided appropriately, many of them across the federation. The work of senior leaders and those leading some areas such as special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, shows that the school has a strong capacity to continue improving. However, the leadership in subjects other than English and mathematics is less well developed and remains an area requiring improvement so that pupils can be helped to achieve better in those subjects.
 - The executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, and English and mathematics subject leaders monitor teaching and learning very effectively and in some depth. They observe lessons, check pupils' work and teachers' planning. Discussions with pupils are also held. The staff are especially effective at monitoring and tracking the progress of different groups of pupils. For example, a recent scrutiny of pupils' work was based on those supported by the pupil premium funding to track their progress. The use of data on pupils' performance is very effective and regular meetings regarding pupils' progress are held so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and tackled.
 - Teachers' performance is checked and recorded in detail to identify strengths and weaknesses.
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The data show how well this has helped teachers improve the quality of their teaching over time. Focused training in areas such as pupils' speaking about their learning and effective marking has ensured that most teaching is at least good. Training is directed by the good teaching and learning policy. The challenging targets set for teachers are based appropriately on raising standards and the priorities in the school improvement plan, as well as their individual professional development.

- The local authority support for the school has been intermittent over time. Current support is more positive and has helped develop the school's use of data on pupils' progress and attainment to support teaching and learning. Exemplary aspects of the school's work are now being used to support other schools in the authority with, for example, work on the provision for pupils with English as an additional language or the support and training provided for newly qualified teachers.
 - The funding available through the pupil premium is used very effectively to help eligible pupils take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time. The progress made by these pupils is closely monitored by the senior staff and governing body and the data clearly indicate that gaps in attainment are narrowing.
 - Some effective and imaginative links between subjects bring learning to life. For example, excellent puppets were made in a design and technology lesson linked to pupils' literacy work on the story of Robin Hood. The use of homework has improved and has had a positive impact on the better links with parents and carers.
 - The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has rapidly improved its effectiveness in holding the school to account over the past two years. As a result, good appointments have been made to senior positions, funding is used effectively and standards are rising. Frequent visits to the school help give governors a better understanding of strengths and weaknesses and pupils' achievement. The governors are better at supporting and challenging the school and now do this effectively. A good structure of committees ensures that governors' work is efficiently carried out. They have a clear picture of teaching quality, and understand how targets are set for teachers and how the school deals with any underperformance. Governors ensure that salary increases are linked to the progress made by pupils, teaching quality and responsibilities. They have made good decisions over the spending of the pupil premium and this is having a very positive impact on those pupils' progress. Governors check the impact on pupils' progress carefully to ensure best use of this funding. They have a genuine interest in, and passion for, creating a harmonious and diverse community in and out of school, involving a wide range of faiths and cultures. The governing body makes sure that all national requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112922
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	405438

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	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shayad Mahmood
Headteacher	Tamara Rolfs (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2011
Telephone number	01332 229229
Email address	admin@stjamesj.derby.sch.uk

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