

St James' Church Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107304
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	356134
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms S Gregson
Headteacher	Mrs J Coyle
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, observed 12 teachers and held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. The inspectors observed other aspects of the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including policies, the improvement plans, pupils' work and the school's records indicating pupils' progress and attainment. The inspectors also analysed the 95 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- Are there any indications that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is improving?
- Do teaching and the curriculum provide sufficient challenge for higher ability pupils?
- How does the quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school influence pupils' well-being and development?
- How well do self-evaluation systems enable the school's performance to be evaluated and action taken to bring about improvement?
- How well is the newly developed outside area for the Early Years Foundation Stage utilised?

Information about the school

St James' is an average sized primary school. While a majority of pupils are White British, the proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is steadily increasing and currently accounts for just over two in five of all pupils. Approximately a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, but only a few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the number who have a statement of special educational needs is average. A small number of children are looked after by the local authority. A relatively large percentage of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education. As well as being an Investor in Pupils, the school has Healthy School status and has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark and Artsmark awards.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St James' Church Primary School provides its pupils with a good quality education and looks after them well. Pupils from a wide range of social, religious and cultural backgrounds work and play in complete harmony, and throughout the school the atmosphere is warm and friendly. This is particularly important to the many pupils who join the school other than at the normal point of entry, as it enables them to settle quickly and to continue their education with a minimum of disruption.

From a starting point that is often quite low when they start school, pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding and by the end of Year 6 attain standards that are close to the national average. Pupils read confidently and with understanding, have a good grasp of numbers and calculate competently. Most pupils write reasonably well during literacy lessons but they are given too few opportunities to write in detail and at length in other subjects. Consequently, pupils' writing lags behind their other basic skills. Pupils are set clear and often detailed individual targets to help them improve their literacy but these are not always evident in lessons and not something they automatically refer to while they are working.

Teaching is good. Varied and interesting lessons provide the stimulus pupils need to learn well. Because they enjoy the tasks they are set pupils work hard and take a pride in what they are able to achieve. Most pupils are polite, well mannered and attentive in class. A small minority find behaving well all of the time difficult and need regular help to do so. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but a lack of consistency in the application of the school's marking policy makes it difficult for pupils to appreciate fully how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. The good quality of care, support and guidance the school provides helps pupils grow in confidence and mature into sensible and responsible individuals.

As a result of clear leadership and well focused development, the school has moved forward at a good pace since it was last inspected. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen and there are now clear signs of improvement in Key Stage 1. The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body monitor the school's performance systematically and draw accurate conclusions from the outcomes. Wide consultation ensures priorities for development are meaningful and clearly understood by all those involved in the pupils' education. These factors combined give the school good capacity for improvement in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:

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- providing more stimulus for pupils to write in detail and at length across all subjects
- ensuring that pupils make full use of their individual literacy targets in all of their work.
- Increase pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve by applying the marking policy fully and consistently throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Classrooms are busy, lively places because pupils are interested in what they are doing and keen to get involved. They thoroughly enjoy learning and describe school as a fun place to be. Many pupils answer questions readily and contribute willingly to class discussions. Relationships are good and as a result, pupils readily seek help so that any difficulties they encounter are quickly overcome. While the vast majority of pupils behave very well both in and out of class, a small minority need regular attention from staff to ensure they and other pupils are getting the best from their lessons. Most pupils apply themselves well and share ideas sensibly when working in groups or with their talking partners.

Across the school as a whole, pupils achieve well and make good progress. This is the especially true of pupils who have spent all of their primary years at the school and have benefited fully from the good education it provides. By the end of Year 6, many pupils attain standards which match the national average, although standards in writing are below average. The measures the school has put in place to raise attainment in Key Stage 1 are showing positive results. Improvement has been slower than in Key Stage 2, but pupils' attainment is moving closer to the national average. Pupils who enter part way through their primary education settle quickly and make good progress during their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities receive well planned and effective help and guidance and make substantial progress relative to their abilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are included fully in lessons and make good gains in their knowledge and skills. Higher ability pupils are challenged to do well and the work they produce is often above average for their age.

Pupils feel completely safe and describe the help and guidance they receive from adults in glowing terms. They express no concerns about bullying and readily agree that everyone gets on extremely well together. Pupils have a good understanding of the factors affecting their health and many exercise and play sports regularly to help them keep fit. Average attendance and the development of a range of basic skills provide a satisfactory platform for future learning and beyond. Many pupils develop into thoughtful individuals with a strong sense of right and wrong. They appreciate the need to help each other and contribute well to the school and local community. Pupils appreciate the richness and diversity of the community in which they live and learn to value cultures that are different to their own.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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?

Lessons are planned carefully, resourced well and have clear objectives for pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge. New work is introduced clearly with good use made of information and communication technology to add interest and to aid pupils' understanding. Very occasionally, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher before getting down to their individual tasks. Teachers employ a range of strategies that engage and motivate pupils, including the effective use of 'talking partners' to encourage the sharing of ideas. Relationships are very positive with some teachers using humour effectively to enliven discussions and engage the pupils. Challenge is often matched well to pupils' abilities, and teachers, particularly in the older classes, have high expectations of what will be achieved. Although pupils' behaviour is mostly managed well, very occasionally the strategies employed are not effective enough and interruptions slow the pace of the lesson. Teaching assistants are deployed well and pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit considerably from their skilled work.

Since the last inspection, the school has undertaken extensive development of the curriculum and continues to fine tune it to pupils' needs. This has resulted in a vibrant, well planned and broad ranging programme of work which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Different subjects are linked together meaningfully and regular visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning. Themed work, such a recent whole-school Black History topic broadens

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pupils' horizons and helps their understanding of cultures that may be different to their own. While an appropriate amount of time is allocated to English and mathematics, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills through writing in other subjects. Pupils value the different clubs and additional experiences the school provides and participate in them enthusiastically.

Pupils are provided with good quality pastoral support and guidance, which has a positive effect on their confidence and enjoyment of school. A very careful watch is kept over pupils who may be vulnerable, including those looked after by the local authority. Working in conjunction with a wide range of outside agencies the school ensures they get the best possible support and are able to make good progress in their learning. The school's very thorough procedures to improve attendance are reducing the amount of time lost through pupils' absence but gains are made slowly and painstakingly and the school is raising its efforts even higher. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is organised and managed well. Pupils' needs are identified early and strategies quickly put in place to support them. The small number of pupils who have difficulty behaving well benefit greatly from the periods they spend in the nurture group, learning self-control and gaining valuable experience in working alongside others.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 school is led and managed well. The headteacher supported by a team of experienced and conscientious senior staff provides clear direction and a strong sense of purpose. Because they are involved fully in the life of the school, staff feel their contributions are valued and work closely as a team. Management systems are well-established and effective so that the school runs smoothly day to day. The governing body is effective and well informed. Governors play a strategic role in school development and decision making. The effective use of funds to retain experienced staff and provide many pupils with the stability which they lack in their everyday lives typifies the well considered approach to financial management.

Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are thorough and effective. All adults working with pupils are fully vetted and policies relating to child protection provide clear and detailed guidance. Community cohesion is promoted well. The community spirit within school is strong and links with the local community are well established and productive. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively. Effective monitoring provides a clear picture of the performance of different groups of pupils, enabling any differences to be identified and acted upon quickly. Links with parents and carers are well established

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and the school is constantly looking for ways to involve them further in their children's learning. The school works closely in partnership with many organisations, and these links have a very positive effect on pupils' welfare, well-being and achievement.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and levels of development that are well below those often found at this age, particularly in the key areas of communication and language, personal development and numbers. As a result of good teaching, generous staffing and a lively and stimulating environment, children make good progress and learn quickly. However, they have a lot of ground to make up and by the end of Reception, many children do not quite reach the levels expected for their age.

Based on careful observations and thorough assessments of the children's progress, staff plan purposeful activities to move learning forward. These often have a common theme, such as the current 'Owl Babies' topic. Walking quietly around the grounds looking for birds and putting ingredients together to make 'bird cake' generated much interest and enthusiasm, and children recognised the relevance of what they were doing. Although for part of the day, limitations of the building prevent children from moving freely in and out of doors, good improvement has been made to the outside area since the last inspection. Staff use facilities well, broadening children's experiences and encouraging them to explore the world around them. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic leader. She has a clear understanding of the strengths of the provision and has identified how further opportunities for reading and writing would enhance the outside area. Welfare requirements are met well and children are happy and safe. The partnership with parents and carers is good and they spend time in nursery when their children first join the school to help them to settle in.

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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:	2
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

With very few exceptions, parents and carers are very pleased with the experiences their children are receiving and confident that they are safe and well cared for. They feel welcome at the school and describe staff as approachable and wanting the best for the children. One parent expressed concern regarding the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. On all the occasions inspectors visited this area, children were enjoying a good range of carefully planned and well resourced activities. A small number of parents and carers said they would like to be kept better informed by the school. Inspectors feel that three consultation evenings each year provides good opportunities for parents and carers to discuss their children's progress with staff. In addition, the recently introduced system of sending information to parents and carers by text is helping to ensure information reaches those who need it.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St James' Church 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	65	30	32	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	57	60	38	40	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	51	40	42	5	5	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	46	48	51	2	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	54	42	44	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	49	43	45	3	3	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	45	48	51	3	3	1	1
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)	36	38	50	53	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	49	46	48	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	42	47	49	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	39	51	54	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	45	48	51	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	57	39	41	1	1	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



24 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James Church Primary School Allerton BD15 7YD

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and made us feel comfortable and welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do, and special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school.

Yours is a good school and we understand fully why you enjoy it so much. There is a very friendly atmosphere and we were delighted by how well you all get along. Most of you work hard in lessons and take a pride in what you achieve. This positive attitude to learning does you a great deal of credit. Although most pupils behave well and are considerate to others, a small number need regular reminders about why this is so important. Staff take good care of you and we know you appreciate all the support and guidance they provide. Many of you told us how safe and secure you feel in school and I know staff will be pleased that you feel able to go to them for help.

The progress you make is good because you are taught well and work hard. By the end of Year 6, the work many of you produce is broadly as expected for your age. Although most of you read well and make accurate calculations in numeracy, the quality of your writing is not always as good, particularly outside literacy lessons. We have asked the school to provide more opportunities for you to write in other subjects, such as in topic work, to help improve your writing further. You can help by making full use of your literacy targets and referring to them every time you start a piece of writing. In addition, we have asked teachers to make more use of the marking symbols that are in the front of your workbooks so that you can see clearly how well you have done and what needs to improve.

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Keith Bardon

Lead inspector

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