

# Saint James' Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116331
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357942
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Carnaghan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	403
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Ayles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Harrie Macarte
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Moorgreen Road West End Southampton SO30 3EG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried by four additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons taught by 14 teachers and held meetings with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at its records, assessments, policies, as well as analysing questionnaires received from staff, pupils and 113 parents and carers.

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

- To what extent have the reforms introduced recently by the school led to improved attainment and progress?
- How effectively does the school promote better teaching and is the proportion of good teaching improving?
- Does assessment inform school self-evaluation and are pupils aware of their targets for the future?

## Information about the school

St James' Church of England Primary School is larger than average. Most pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; the largest group of these pupils has moderate learning difficulties. The current headteacher took up post in April 2010.

**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

This is a satisfactory school. There is a trend of improvement and Saint James' has a number of good aspects, notably relating to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school, their attendance is above average and they feel safe because behaviour is good and there is little bullying. Parents and carers are engaged closely with the school and most are very happy with what it provides. One, typically, commented 'I have appreciated the changes made to the school. In so many ways and on a daily basis, activities reflect the school's aims and caring ethos through which children are celebrated and valued.'

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and slowly starting to improve as the school's reforms begin to take effect. No groups underachieve as they did in the past. Given their starting points, pupils' achievement, including of those pupils with moderate learning and other difficulties, is satisfactory.

Teaching has improved and is satisfactory overall. In the less successful lessons, the pace and challenge for pupils are not rigorous enough, so pupils learn too slowly. Assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent; marking and the setting of targets for pupils are particularly variable. The school has started to track progress in greater detail, but there are still some inaccuracies in assessment that make the system less effective than it could be.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a satisfactory start for children's education. However, many lessons are too teacher-led so children lack sufficient opportunities to develop their creativity and independence. They have too few occasions when they can play and learn in the outside areas.

The school is improving because leaders, managers, governing body and other staff work well together. The governing body makes a distinctive and effective contribution to helping the school to improve. The school leadership team has focused on addressing weaknesses, especially in teaching and assessment, and there is evidence of improvements in a number of areas, despite some remaining weaknesses. Accurate self-evaluation means the school is aware of what it needs to do to make significant progress and raise attainment. The optimism and ambition of the headteacher are shared by the staff. There is a drive to eliminate weaknesses, which, together with a secure track-record of improvement, gives the school satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

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

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By summer 2012, raise attainment by:

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- increasing the proportion of good and better teaching, ensuring that it focuses more closely on improving learning outcomes for all pupils
  - tracking all groups of pupils with greater accuracy to ensure they make consistently good progress
  - marking pupils' books more thoroughly and setting clearly understood targets so all pupils know the next steps in their learning.
- By January 2012, develop the curriculum and the use of accommodation in the Early Years Foundation Stage to offer more opportunities for children to initiate their own learning and develop greater independence.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and a little higher in English than mathematics. Attainment in English is improving steadily, but improvement in mathematics is slower because of recent changes to develop the leadership and assessment of mathematics that have yet to impact fully on pupils' progress. A focus on eliminating areas of weakness has closed previous gaps in attainment. Improved support given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has largely closed the gap between this group's progress and that of other pupils, so that there are now few variations. Where boys' progress had previously lagged behind girls', there is now no significant difference in achievement between the two. Satisfactory teaching promotes satisfactory progress, helped by pupils' sound enjoyment of learning. Given their starting points, the achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties, is satisfactory.

Progress in lessons varies with the quality of teaching. A successful mathematics lesson on subtraction saw Year 4 pupils learning effectively because the teaching explained things precisely, was brisk and all groups were challenged fully. Pupils reacted well to the teacher's high expectations, behaving with maturity and working well together.

Invariably, pupils behave well, both in classrooms and around the school. They confirm that bullying is rare and dealt with severely when it occurs. Pupils are polite, friendly, get on well together and are considerate to visitors. They enjoy school and their attendance is consistently above average. The positive ethos of the school contributes to pupils' confidence in their safety. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to their good understanding of risks in the wider world, such as on the busy local roads. Older pupils take their peer mentoring duties seriously and contribute well to the harmonious atmosphere on the playground and school field.

Pupils understand what it takes to grow up healthily and often choose sporting and healthy activities such as walking or cycling to school. They appreciate the benefits of a healthy diet and the impact this has on their bodies. Pupils have a good grasp of right and wrong and are keen to reflect on their experiences. They work well together, but have limited opportunities to develop an understanding of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teaching has improved over the last 12 months because better monitoring has increased the proportion of good teaching and begun to eliminate weaknesses. Professional development is improving less effective practice in teaching, but the school acknowledges that some inconsistencies remain. Thorough planning leads to most lessons meeting the needs of pupils of differing abilities and teaching assistants are deployed usefully to help those facing barriers to learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive, so pupils want to please their teachers and develop good attitudes towards learning. However, the pace of some lessons is too slow and there can be insufficient emphasis on learning; in these circumstances, pupils make more limited progress.

Recent developments to assessment procedures have not yet impacted on subjects beyond English, where attainment is rising. In other areas, assessment is inconsistent. When teaching is good, teachers provide useful advice and give pupils a clear direction for improvement. Weaker practice leads to insecure assessment and cursory marking, so pupils are unsure about how to improve. Despite inaccuracies in some assessments, the new school tracking system provides useful information on pupils' progress and indicates where additional resources need to be deployed. For example, the introduction of a broader variety of intervention strategies has boosted the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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The curriculum meets statutory requirements; it is currently under review to improve its creativity and dynamism. When subjects are linked together, pupils are more enthused about learning and their progress accelerates because they can see greater purpose in the activities. For example, Year 4 pupils enjoyed art work related to their historical studies of Ancient Egypt particularly. Pupils enjoy opportunities for after-school activities and sporting clubs are particularly popular.

Parents, carers and pupils are confident in the quality of pastoral care provided by the school, pupils reporting that teachers are always ready to listen to them and offer help. The school provides a welcoming environment and its procedures to minimise absence are notably successful. Inconsistencies in marking mean the guidance provided for pupils lacks sharpness. The school provides satisfactory and improving support for potentially vulnerable pupils and those with moderate learning and other difficulties.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and senior leadership team are committed to improvements and have focused on the correct priorities to raise achievement. They monitor provision with increasing rigour to improve teaching and learning, so the proportion of inadequate teaching has fallen sharply. Senior leaders have also focused with some success on improving assessment and are developing a record of pupils' progress that enables them both to challenge teachers and to put in place interventions to boost the progress of pupils in danger of under-achievement. Changes to the leadership and management of the school are relatively recent so that their impact on achievement is not yet fully evident. However, the closing of gaps between the progress of different groups of pupils indicates that equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily and pupils confirm that there is no discrimination.

The governing body has been influential in supporting the new headteacher as she has introduced reforms. Its systematic evaluation of the school in the last year has provided it with a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has provided a good basis for the support and challenge it provides to the school. The governing body keeps a close watch on the school's safeguarding procedures, which have improved significantly in the last year. Pupils, parents and carers recognise that the school is a safe place. Site security is good and all adults receive appropriate training, which is updated regularly. Key agencies, such as social services, are involved closely to reduce the risk of harm to pupils.

The school has worked with success to engage with parents and carers. Newsletters, a texting service and 'parent mail' provide a good flow of information to homes and there

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are three evenings for parents and carers each year. The parents' association has raised considerable sums of money and its expertise has been used in landscaping a significant proportion of the school's grounds. Secure partnerships with local schools have led to joint sporting and academic activities. Strong links with nurseries and secondary schools ensure that transition for children into and out of school goes as smoothly as possible.

The school has a clear understanding of its local context, based on a thorough audit. The school is cohesive and pupils reach out to other local communities, for example through raising funds for a children's ward in a local hospital. The school is promoting community cohesion by initiating links with an inner-city school in the United Kingdom and a rural school in Rwanda, but these associations are currently at an early stage of development. That limits opportunities for pupils to mix with people from other cultural backgrounds. Evaluation of the school's planned actions are also at a relatively early stage.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and good progress in personal and social development. By the end of the Reception Year, reading, numeracy and personal skills are above average, whilst those in writing, creativity and linking letters to sounds are average. Children enjoy learning and working together and cooperate particularly well in supporting one another's reading. They develop confidence and are willing to join in, share and communicate.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a colourful, welcoming environment and children are well cared for because their welfare is a high priority for all adults. There is a good range of processes for collecting information to support assessment, but assessment is not consistently accurate and does not always feed into planning for children's future learning. Curriculum planning covers all required areas of learning, but places too great an



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emphasis on learning through adult-directed activities. The well-resourced outdoor area is poorly used and does not help children learn by exploration and this limits the development of their creativity and independence.

Parents and carers confirm that they feel that they are partners in their children's education because they are consulted regularly and welcomed when they visit; several volunteer to help in classrooms. Induction arrangements are good, for example there are well-managed procedures for newcomers to visit, both with and without their parents and carers, before entering the school. Home visits and key workers ensure that children become familiar with the setting quickly. However, the leaders have not adapted the curriculum fully to provide the full range of experiences for children.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The response to the Ofsted questionnaire was slightly below average. The views of parents and carers were very favourable. Almost all said their children enjoy school, that the school encourages children to be healthy and prepares them well for the future. A very large majority were happy with their children's experience of school. A few parents and carers had concerns over leadership and management, children's progress and information about progress. Inspection evidence showed all aspects of leadership and management to be at least satisfactory. The quality of pupils' learning and progress is judged to be satisfactory. The school's engagement with parents and carers, which reflects the quality of information provided, is judged to be good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saint James' Church of England 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 403 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	54	50	44	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	53	50	44	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	23	72	64	14	12	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	29	63	56	16	14	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	40	60	53	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	25	69	61	11	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	39	64	57	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	23	75	66	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	28	69	61	8	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	24	68	60	9	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	27	63	56	12	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	35	31	62	55	9	8	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	42	57	50	7	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Saint James' Church of England Primary School, Southampton  
SO30 3EG**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and are pleased that you enjoy school so much.

Saint James' provides you with a satisfactory education and is starting to improve. There are a number of good things, such as your behaviour and your understanding of how to grow up safely and healthily. By the end of Year 6, the standard of work you achieve in English and in mathematics is similar to most pupils in the country and your achievement is satisfactory.

Teaching is satisfactory, but could be more exciting at times and include more lessons which help you to make more-rapid progress. It was pleasing to hear that you think you are well cared for and we agree, but think you would benefit from better advice in how to improve your work.

In order to improve more quickly, we are asking the school to focus on:

- raising the standards of attainment you achieve by the time you move to secondary school by making sure all lessons focus closely on your learning, by keeping a closer check on your progress and by giving you better advice about how to improve your work
- giving children in the Early Years Foundation Stage more opportunities to learn and play independently, indoors and out.

You can help by maintaining the very positive attitudes you have to school life. Once again, thanks for all your help. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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