

# St James' CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116903
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379325
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Lewis

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	91
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Winters
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Surrall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	West Malvern Road Malvern WR14 4BB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed eight lessons taught by five teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, and tracking and assessment data. Questionnaires from 45 parents and carers, 56 pupils and 10 staff were analysed.

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

- What are the quality and rigour of the school's tracking and assessment systems?
- Are there variations in the quality of teaching and, hence, progress across the school?
- What is the quality of provision for the outdoor curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

## Information about the school

This is a very small school in a rural setting. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average, as is the proportion from minority ethnic groups. The great majority of pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average and there is currently very few pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school has gained the ActiveMark, Healthy Schools award and Eco Flag.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

St. James' Church of England Primary is an outstanding school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and continues to do so under the strong and inspiring leadership of the headteacher. She provides a very clear sense of purpose and direction, closely linked to school improvement. Her effective leadership has ensured that teaching and learning have improved at a rapid pace and clear priorities have been set for further improvement. The excellent teamwork and the driving ambition of the whole staff are central to the school's significant improvement since the last inspection and its continuing success. Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school and delighted with their children's experiences in the school. Typical comments included, 'Both our children love St. James' and we feel that they couldn't have a better start to their school lives', and 'The school has outstandingly strong leadership – staff are keen to ensure the children's learning and welfare'.

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Most pupils start in the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age. By the time they leave the school, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made excellent progress. They typically attain well above average standards in the core subjects although standards in writing in the latest national tests were not as high as in previous years nor as high as the very high standards achieved in reading and mathematics. Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make excellent progress. Planning and provision for both the indoor and outdoor curriculum is now very good and as a result, children have a very good range of opportunities to develop their independent learning skills. This is one way in which the school has moved forward considerably since the last inspection. Teaching is consistently good or better and is a strong contributory factor in pupils' excellent progress. Parents and carers say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree enthusiastically. Pupils display very positive attitudes to their learning, as evidenced in their excellent levels of attendance, and their exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils have a wide range of responsibilities in the school and, through the work of the school council, make an outstanding contribution to the school community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting the school's Christian aims. Through the school's growing links with a variety of other schools in the United Kingdom and overseas, pupils are beginning to develop an insight into similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures. Their good social skills and excellent standards equip them very well for the future.

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The excellent curriculum and consistently good teaching result in pupils developing a very wide range of skills for the next stage of their education. This includes many leadership and team work skills through their involvement in school life and in the community. Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils are able to learn and develop confidence, regardless of their individual circumstances. The performance of pupils is tracked very closely, with particular attention to the performance of different groups. St. James' is a highly inclusive school and all pupils are able to take full advantage of all the school has to offer. The school has an excellent understanding of how well it is doing and what needs to be done next, and due to the high quality of its self-evaluation, it has an excellent capacity to maintain and sustain improvement.

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

- Work to improve standards in writing, so that they match the very high standards achieved in reading and mathematics, by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across a range of subjects.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Standards in lessons seen and in pupils' books indicate that at both key stages the pupils are on track to continue reaching the significantly above average standards achieved in previous years. Pupils' exemplary behaviour is an outstanding factor in the good or better progress they make in lessons and creates a very positive school ethos. The response of pupils in lessons is always positive. They work well together and individually without the need for constant reminders and there is no evidence of disruptive behaviour. In one outstanding Year 5/6 numeracy lesson, the teacher encouraged very high levels of motivation by her energy and enthusiasm for the subject, set and maintained a very good pace throughout and closely matched tasks to pupils' ability, setting challenges for each group with the result that all pupils made excellent progress.

Pupils say they feel safe in and around the school and speak maturely about the need to be aware of safety issues but also to be sensible about risk. They comment very positively on the many adults and pupils who look after them and help them resolve their disputes. They know and understand the important factors which affect their health and respond well to the school's health promotion strategies which have earned the school the Healthy Schools' Award. Pupils value their school community and willingly take on responsibilities. They participate constructively in school life, suggesting and taking actions to help improve the school, and are involved in a wide range of community activities in and out of school and in their local church. They are very well equipped for the future with their well-developed academic and social skills, having learned to be self-reliant, confident in public and in speaking. They respect each others' needs and interests and are curious about the world around them.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges pupils and contributes to their very good progress. They know the needs of every pupil exceptionally well so that they are able to provide high quality learning experiences for all pupils, resulting in excellent progress for pupils of all abilities. Lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives that are routinely shared with pupils. Activities are organised meticulously to meet the needs of the different age and ability groups within each class. Good use is made of resources, including new technology, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Excellent classroom management skills ensure that pupils work well together and there are no marked differences in the responses of boys or girls. Carefully targeted questioning draws out pupils' ideas and develops their thinking and reasoning skills. Support by teaching assistants is skilled and well focused and makes an excellent contribution to the quality of learning in many lessons.

The detailed and rigorous whole-school assessment and tracking system provides the school with secure and detailed data on individual pupil’s progress as they move through the school. The senior management team use this data very well to make a detailed and accurate analysis of groups' or individual's progress and to amend the curriculum to better meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Detailed marking of pupils’ work, the use of small group and individual targets which are referred to regularly and peer and self-assessment by pupils are all used very effectively to promote pupils’ learning.

The curriculum is excellent because it provides exciting activities that ensure all

<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

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groups of pupils experience success. Collaboration with other schools and a range of partnerships further enrich the curriculum. The school's outstanding arrangements for the care of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, contribute to their very good development and well-being and support their learning very well. Staff know and care deeply for all pupils and provide rigorous safeguarding and welfare procedures to help ensure the safety of all pupils, including those facing difficult situations.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has consistently communicated to the staff her very high expectations about continuing to improve provision. The result of this is clearly evident in the significant improvements made since she joined the school. With the able support of the deputy headteacher and an enthusiastic, committed and well-motivated staff team she has identified and has rigorously and successfully tackled areas requiring improvement. All staff work very effectively together and regularly take advantage of professional opportunities to enhance their work. The school's thorough self-evaluation has identified all the key priorities for development. As a result of regular monitoring and support, teaching is excellent and planning is founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data. The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school and fully and systematically involved in evaluating its work. It has good systems to ensure that pupils and staff are safe and discharge their duties effectively.

The school has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. This effective liaison with parents, carers and with other partners contributes significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being. The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement. It is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. School leaders and governors have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and adopt recommended good practice for safeguarding pupils across all areas of its work. However, the school's record keeping systems for informing parents and carers of minor accidents during the school day lack sufficient rigour. The school promotes community cohesion within its own and the local community very effectively. In addition, it has good links with a school in Tanzania and active links with two schools in contrasting environments in the United Kingdom. However, it has yet to fully evaluate the effectiveness of its work in order to build upon its strengths

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systematically. The school makes excellent use of all its resources, in particular the skilful deployment of staff where they are most needed, and provides excellent value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the outdoor curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage classroom now has free access to a secure, partly covered outdoor area, resourced with a good range of free-choice and adult-led activities. This allows children to explore things with purpose and enthusiasm and encourages the development of their independent learning skills. The outstanding interaction between all staff and children, combined with the extremely well thought-out organisation of the accommodation, curriculum and choice of resources, ensures that all aspects of the provision are of exceptionally high quality. The relatively small cohorts mean that overall attainment on entry to the school in September can vary significantly from year to year. Children make excellent progress in their time in the Reception/Year 1 class. They clearly enjoy school and have settled into the routines well and play happily together and individually. They undertake a variety of whole class and group activities and, in most cases, cooperate well when working with others. They delight in learning and seeing new things. The excellent ratio of adults to children ensures that individual learning needs are consistently met. Adults know the children and families very well. Regular observations by staff inform them about children's particular interests and their achievements. All adults contribute to daily assessments which build up into a comprehensive picture of each child's development in different strands of learning. These observations and assessments are used exceptionally well to plan ever more challenging tasks. Adults are skilled at intervening at appropriate moments to ask

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open questions which prompt children to think. The main focus is on promoting learning through first-hand experiences, such as the regular 'Forest School' activities. A rich and creative mix of activities provides children with memorable experiences and a thirst for learning. Teachers have very good knowledge of the learning development and welfare requirements and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Early identification of individuals' needs and very close working with outside agencies mean that children receive first-rate support to help them thrive. Staff excel at building up a comprehensive picture of each child in their care.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are very satisfied with the school. All who responded felt that their children enjoy school and that the school encourages their children to have a healthy lifestyle. The very large majority agree with all the other statements. They believe the school keeps their children safe, deals well with unacceptable behaviour, is well-led, helps them support their children and meets their children's particular needs. They feel that teaching is good at the school, that the school prepares their children well for the future and declare themselves, overall, happy with their children's experience at the school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St James' CofE 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 inspectors received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	80	8	18	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	42	24	53	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	53	17	38	3	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	56	15	33	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	23	51	17	38	1	2	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	67	15	33	0	0	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)	25	56	17	38	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	23	51	17	38	3	7	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	40	21	47	3	7	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	47	19	42	4	9	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	29	64	14	31	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	34	76	7	16	2	4	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.**



24 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St James' CofE Primary School, Malvern, WR14 4BB**

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to as many of you as we could. You attend an outstanding, very happy and friendly school. It is led exceptionally well by the headteacher and the staff. They care for you extremely well and give you excellent support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you do this well. You told us that you really like your school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. Excellent teaching is an outstanding feature of your school and this, combined with exciting curriculum activities and your hard work, results in you making excellent progress and achieving very high standards. We feel that you make an excellent contribution to the life of your school through all the responsibilities you take on and through your school council. Your behaviour is excellent and you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do. Well done!

We have asked your school to do one thing that we feel will make the school even better:

- work to improve your overall standards of writing so that they match the very high standards you achieve in reading and mathematics.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis  
Lead inspector

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