

St James Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125176
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381058
Inspection dates	21–22 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Burbidge
Headteacher	Ann Tann
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 14 lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding policies and other documents presented by the school. Questionnaires from 123 parents and carers, 29 members of staff and 91 pupils were scrutinised.

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

- How provision is increasing pupils' progress, particularly that of girls in mathematics and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How well teaching and the involvement of pupils in assessment meet their differing needs and are aiding learning.
- The impact of leaders at all levels, including the governing body, on improving teaching and learning.
- How well care, guidance and support help raise the self-esteem of all pupils.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British, with a few coming from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have a range of needs, including behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has received several awards, including the Silver Food For Life Award. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Reception class.

The Children's Centre at the school is managed by the governing body but is newly opened and did not form part of this inspection.

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

Pupils receive a satisfactory education at this welcoming and socially inclusive school. Members of staff work well with parents and carers to provide good care, guidance and support so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can enjoy school and develop good self-esteem. Two parents spoke for many others by saying, 'My son has considerable special needs, and the staff are incredibly inclusive and supportive in every way', and 'Every child is valued and taken care of.'

Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Members of staff provide many exciting activities that enable the children to learn quickly, and this is now beginning to give a more secure base for future progress in the school. Between Years 1 and 6, pupils build steadily on what they learn, leading to broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress, while satisfactory, is uneven between classes and subjects. Pupils do better in reading and writing than in mathematics. Leaders are aware that in mathematics, pupils, and girls in particular, do not always do well enough. Not all teaching is sufficiently clear in ensuring that pupils understand their work when working independently, and some quieter girls lack confidence in answering questions.

While there are several good features in teaching, it is typically only satisfactory because teachers do not consistently provide challenging work that matches the needs of all pupils, or check that all pupils maintain a good pace when not working directly with an adult. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive some valuable additional support but do not consistently make good progress. Teachers are involving pupils more in assessing learning through marking and target setting, although advice given is not consistent or always followed through to ensure that it leads to rapid progress. Pupils behave considerately towards each other and are good at helping in the local community by performing their beautiful two-part singing for senior citizens and by helping to protect the environment by litter picking in the local streets. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and consequently appreciate healthy food and exercise.

There are satisfactory procedures for school self-evaluation that support leaders in identifying the right plans for improvement. Leaders have a slightly overgenerous view of how well the school is doing but are strongly committed to raising pupils' attainment. Leaders, including the governing body, are aware that monitoring and evaluation are not always sufficiently rigorous to ensure that weaknesses in provision

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and performance are identified and remedied as soon as they arise. Nevertheless, the school has built up a wealth of information about individual pupils and has been successful in narrowing the gap in attainment levels between reading and writing, demonstrating competent leadership and a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement. The school is good at promoting community cohesion through links with other schools and educational visits.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Accelerate learning and progress across the school, especially in mathematics for girls, by:
 - building the confidence and involvement of girls in discussions
 - ensuring that pupils fully understand their tasks when working independently and always work quickly.
- Raise the proportion of good or better teaching by:
 - always providing challenging work that matches pupils' differing needs
 - checking that pupils are working at a good pace throughout lessons
 - ensuring that teachers' marking consistently shows pupils their next steps and is used to move learning forward.
- Increase the rigour of monitoring and evaluating provision and progress so that all leaders, including the governing body, can identify and tackle weaknesses swiftly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment on entry varies. In the most recent year, the large majority of children were working within the levels typical for their age when they started school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and attainment on entry to Year 1 rose to above average. Above average attainment has not yet worked its way through to Year 6. Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is evident in their above average attendance and enthusiasm. For example, during an exciting start to an English lesson, pupils in Year 3 enjoyed working together by singing a song about onomatopoeia and, as a result, they learned quickly.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, though progress varies between lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 5, pupils developed a good understanding of similes during a clear and well-structured lesson. In contrast, in a mathematics lesson for younger pupils, pupils working on their own were unclear about what they were expected to learn, limiting their involvement and the pace of learning.

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Pupils say that they feel safe at school and their parents agree, although a few are wary of boisterous behaviour on the playground. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Clear guidance during acts of worship and in lessons supports this development well and pupils learn to empathise with others. Pupils behave well, support each other in their learning and are good at taking responsibility. For example, pupils grow and sell their own vegetables and raise funds for charity. Pupils are proud of their school and have a strong sense of community. They extend their knowledge of the wider world through lessons, and especially appreciate cooking meals from various cultures. The school deserves its Silver Food For Life Award because pupils are keen to take part in the various sporting activities available, and there is a high uptake of the healthy school meals. Although pupils enjoy school and aspects of their personal development are good, their average attainment in literacy and numeracy means their preparation for their next stage of education is satisfactory rather than good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils and use praise effectively to help manage and support the behaviour of those with specific behavioural issues. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and are tolerant in lessons, even when tasks lack challenge. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, work well with groups of pupils and provide some interesting activities. For example, in a well taught English lesson in Year 3, the teacher used a range of tasks to support learning about onomatopoeia in the poem 'The Sound Catcher'. In less well

¹ 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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taught lessons, teachers do not ensure that all pupils are challenged consistently, especially when they are working independently. This is because they do not make sufficiently rigorous use of assessment information to fine tune work for different groups of pupils or ensure that pupils fully understand the tasks. Teaching assistants provide some valuable support but are not always utilised fully during whole-class discussions.

Pupils are involved in selecting topics within the curriculum and especially appreciate the practical activities planned. There is a good range of additional activities, including educational visits and the use of the outdoors. The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology skills. The curriculum is satisfactory because there are missed opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in their learning and it currently only supports satisfactory learning, especially in mathematics.

Parents, carers and pupils are very positive about the care and support the school provides. Pupils, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, receive good care, guidance and support and close links with parents and carers are firmly established and helping to increase attendance. Good transition arrangements help pupils to move smoothly from one stage of education to the next and individual progress is tracked carefully. Leaders are reviewing the marking policy so that academic guidance is consistently effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are embedding ambition and driving improvement securely. They are aware of comparative strengths and weaknesses in provision, but monitoring and evaluation are not used rigorously enough to ensure that areas of weakness are identified and tackled as soon as they arise. Nevertheless, leaders have an increasing awareness of what to do to help the school to become good in the future, and promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination competently. Pupils from different backgrounds are supported and encouraged equally; they are included well, socially, and the school is working appropriately with external agencies to eliminate unevenness in learning and progress between lessons and subjects.

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and leaders ensure that all members of staff are checked thoroughly and trained appropriately. However,

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there are some minor health and safety issues to resolve. Nevertheless, pupils and their parents and carers have confidence in the safeguarding arrangements and know that the school takes effective action when concerns are raised.

The governing body meets statutory requirements and is knowledgeable about the school. It asks some challenging questions and is developing its role in improving provision and pupils' progress. The school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils are very involved in the local community and are tracking the progress of a former pupil who is travelling in Bangladesh. The school is expanding opportunities for pupils to learn even more about other cultures through its developing links with a school in The Gambia.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception class and the most recent year group entered Year 1 with above average attainment. Children settle into school well and make especially good progress in personal development because independence is promoted well. Members of staff work closely with parents and carers to establish good relationships with the children and to develop their confidence. A wide range of well planned activities engage the children's interest both indoors and outside. For example, pupils outside enjoyed working on the building site and indoors children were happy to explore the properties of various light filters.

Children enjoy learning, behave sensibly and are happy to talk about what they are doing because adults work sensitively alongside them. Very occasionally, during whole-class work, opportunities are missed to involve all the children in discussion. Assessment arrangements are thorough and information collected is used to adapt

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the curriculum. For example, last year, children were making less progress in communication, language and literacy than in other areas of learning, so more activities are centred around developing these skills. While activities now include some good opportunities for children to write, these are not always promoted fully to encourage children to use them. Leaders have successfully raised attainment over the past year and continue to improve provision and the children's progress. For example, there is greater emphasis on developing the children's knowledge of sounds and letters.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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

A higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire. A very large majority are pleased with all aspects of the school's work, especially that their children enjoy school, the help the school gives them to support learning, and the quality of teaching. The inspection team found that the school provides good support for parents and carers and that pupils enjoy school. Although teachers are enthusiastic and caring, teaching was found to be satisfactory overall. A few parents and carers expressed concerns over the way unacceptable behaviour was dealt with. The inspection team found that pupils generally behave well and that any dips in behaviour are tackled quickly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St James Church of England Aided Primary 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 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	75	31	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	100	81	22	18	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	56	52	42	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	55	51	41	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	89	72	34	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	62	46	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	91	74	29	24	3	2	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)	71	58	45	37	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	66	39	32	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	44	58	47	9	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	54	50	41	5	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	88	72	32	26	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	90	73	31	25	1	1	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 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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"> ■ 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.

23 November 2011

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of St James Church of England Aided Primary School,
Godalming, GU8 6DH**

We enjoyed coming to see your friendly school. Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

These are the best things about your school.

- You learn quickly in the Reception Year.
- You behave well and enjoy coming to school.
- You are good at helping around the school and in the local area. It is good that you enjoy growing and selling fruit and vegetables and lead healthy lifestyles.
- We agree with you when you say that teachers care about you and look after you well.
- The headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school better.
- Teachers help you to learn about people from differing backgrounds.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next to help it improve.

- Help you to learn more quickly, especially girls in mathematics, by making sure you are confident, take part in discussions and know what to do when you are working independently.
- Make sure that teachers always give you work that is just right for you, check that you are always learning quickly and make sure that you are given and follow advice on how you can improve your work.
- Make sure that leaders check that you are all learning quickly and put things right straight away when you are not.

Thank you once again for telling us about your school and letting us see your work. You can help your teachers by always taking notice of their marking to help improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge
Lead inspector

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