

St. James the Great RC Primary and Nursery School

Windsor Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 8HJ

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding 1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding 1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding 1
Leadership and management		Outstanding 1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All pupils make outstanding progress at this school because they receive excellent support from teachers and other adults. They are expected to work hard, do demanding work and to learn important skills quickly.
- Teachers help pupils to make faster progress than many of their peers nationally by including exciting and creative tasks. Groups of pupils who need extra help receive very good support from other adults.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour in and out of lessons contributes to a harmonious and caring school community. Pupils feel very safe in the school and say that behaviour is always very good in the classrooms and in the playground.
- Pupils read very well and have a real appreciation and love of reading.
- The excellent range of subjects and activities is thoughtfully planned. This contributes to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps them to become mature and sensitive individuals.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are determined to do the very best that they can for all pupils. They make sure that the school has good resources and they regularly check on how well pupils are doing in lessons.
- The governing body is very involved in and supportive of the school. It makes sure that the school is able to run smoothly and efficiently and it knows, in detail, how well pupils are learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons, of which 15 were joint observations with the senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made other short visits to lessons and to learning areas.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, senior and middle managers and teaching staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers as they brought their children to school and to after-school activities.
- The information from 39 staff questionnaires was taken into consideration.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including the school's own data and monitoring of how well pupils progress, and records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality, as well as information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mandy Snook, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
John Sweet	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school with a diverse community and ethnic mix. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is three times the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra government funding through the pupil premium is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who need extra help is broadly average.
- St James the Great converted to become an academy school in April 2012. When its predecessor school was inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- As the school only opened in 2012, there is no validated data on which to judge if the school meets the current floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- At the time of inspection, the school had one new teacher. Most other staff have been at the predecessor school for a longer period of time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the involvement of middle managers in monitoring the school's work and further improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2012 maintained the high levels achieved by the predecessor school. Pupils leaving the school have made much better progress during Key Stage 2 than is the case in most schools. This consistently high level of achievement continues to be seen in lessons, where many pupils work considerably above expectations for their age. Work in mathematics and literacy books shows that pupils make exceptional progress.
- Progress is outstanding for all groups of pupils. Almost all of them achieve the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics, regardless of their starting points. A high proportion of pupils consistently make more than expected progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also make outstanding progress. They join the school with skills broadly in line with expectations for their age and leave Reception class with above average scores in all areas.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the excellent support provided by their teachers and capable teaching assistants. The quality and range of support provided for different groups of pupils are exemplary, which is reflected in the rapid progress made by all.
- Italian and Polish speaking adults very effectively support the learning of pupils who do not speak English as their home language. The school has been awarded the Inclusion Mark accreditation, which acknowledges the school's commitment to narrowing gaps in achievement.
- There are examples of exceptionally good extended writing in Key Stage 2. Pupils use sophisticated vocabulary to describe settings and know how to use punctuation for effect in creating suspense. The teaching of literacy skills in all lessons is of a high standard and is enriched by engaging and interactive tasks, such as where pupils recreated a Greek myth using drama to increase their understanding of the story.
- The school's data tracking system is efficient and well analysed ensuring that the progress of every pupil is known to the leadership team and to class teachers. The school sets high targets for the pupils, knowing that the pupils will achieve them with outstanding support and teaching.
- The relatively small number of pupils who benefit from additional pupil premium funding do exceptionally well in this school. They benefit from extra hours of support from the inclusion manager and from a literacy specialist.
- Pupils read with confidence and good expression and have competent skills in making sense of what they are reading. Their reading is fluent and they have good strategies to work out unfamiliar words. They enjoy a wide range of books and their reading logs show them to be avid readers.
- Parents and carers and staff unreservedly agree that the learning needs of the pupils are met and that they make exceptional progress.
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop a broad range of skills, which enable them to cope extremely well with the demands of the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Pupils benefit from teaching that is outstanding. Challenging tasks are set for pupils of all abilities. Pupils are also given opportunities to participate in a range of extension activities, such as writing competitions, quizzes and debates, which develop their skills and enthusiasm for learning.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are enthusiastic and inspiring in lessons. They ensure that pupils know what they are learning and plan stimulating and creative lessons. Pupils are taught to investigate topics for themselves and to ask searching questions. This was shown in a Year 5 lesson, for example, where pupils were working in groups to decide which aspect of

Dr Barnardo's work had the greatest impact in Victorian England.

- Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and in great detail, providing for the needs of all pupils and making effective use of the skills of other adults in the lessons. They also change planning after careful consideration of what worked well and what would help pupils to learn better in lessons.
- Pupils respond well in lessons and show a good and secure knowledge of both literacy and numeracy skills. They have been taught very well over time and build on firm foundations of knowledge and skills. They are able to assess their own and each other's work and indicate to the teachers how well they understand the tasks and whether or not they need additional help.
- Teachers continuously assess the understanding of the pupils during lessons and clear up any confusion. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses, which makes pupils feel valued and respected. Teachers ensure a constant flow of information exists in their classroom, which results in pupils making very rapid progress. Excellent questioning skills encourage pupils to think for themselves and to develop their opinions on various topics.
- Pupils say that their lessons are fun and that the teachers always have good ideas to help them to learn more easily.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils enjoy their lessons and manage to do a great deal of work every term. They show much enthusiasm for their learning and regularly choose to do more demanding work, which they discuss animatedly with their talk partners and in groups, contributing to a 'buzz' of learning in all lessons. They work exceptionally well both independently and together, which promotes high levels of engagement and confident acquisition of skills.
- Pupils are considerate of each other. They listen well and patiently take turns. They help each other to think of good solutions and share their excellent ideas, which they express clearly and maturely.
- The school's records show that very few incidents of poor behaviour occur and the pupils understand all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. This aspect of their personal development is excellently taught and explained in lessons and in the high-quality assemblies.
- Pupils show respect for all adults and for each other. They are polite, have very good manners and are friendly and cooperative. Older pupils help to look after the younger children. For example, the Year 5 pupils are very responsible and caring 'buddies' for the children in Reception class.
- Conduct at playtime and around the school is orderly and calm. Pupils are self-disciplined and are conscious of right and wrong at all times.
- Pupils said that they feel very safe in the school and their parents and carers and teachers agree.
- Parents and carers, staff and governors agree that behaviour in the school is consistently outstanding, with the highest standards expected at all times.
- Attendance rates are above the national average and pupils are always punctual to school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school is led and managed exceptionally well, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher demonstrating an exemplary work ethic and modelling professional standards in their expectations of excellence.
- The quality of lessons is checked on regularly and rigorously followed by informative and effective feedback, resulting in well-planned professional development and outstanding teaching. Performance management is very structured and used exceptionally well as a tool to bring about

improvement. Staff are not rewarded with increases in pay unless their work meets senior leaders' high expectations.

- Engagement with parents and carers is extremely positive. They are appreciative of the excellent provision their children receive from the school. Consequently they enthusiastically support the school by fund raising and organising many events, which add a warm community dimension to the school.
 - The range of subjects and activities is based on themes and topics, which are carefully planned to include interactive learning opportunities both in lessons and on visits to places of interest where pupils extend their knowledge and gather information. Pupils especially appreciate the residential trips, which provide great opportunities for learning and acquiring skills in outdoor pursuits, such as water sports.
 - Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and this leads to well-organised action plans. Data are used extremely effectively to check and improve how well pupils are doing and to put high-quality interventions and support in place. The pupil premium is used extremely effectively, so that pupils benefiting from this additional funding make the same rapid progress as their peers.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is proactive and positively supports the school and its development by providing strategic direction and ensuring a secure financial base for the school. Governors with particular responsibility for the curriculum visit every term. They engage with pupils in the classrooms and listen to them read. Governors hold the senior leaders to account and scrutinise all aspects of the school's performance. Governors play an important role in ensuring that teachers' pay progression is linked to rigorous performance management systems. They help to ensure excellent provision for all pupils' needs and are committed to providing the best possible learning experience for pupils at this school. They are extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of teaching and learning and are involved in many extra-curricular activities at the school. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to the safeguarding and well-being of pupils, which are managed exceptionally well.
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What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	137959
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	403721

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Edwin Abreo
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Beck
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 87713424
Fax number	020 87710065
Email address	stjames@stjamesthegreat.org

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