

St James' Church of England Primary School

Pokesdown Hill, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6DW

Inspection dates 14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress to reach standards that are well above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good. A well-established programme of observing teaching carried out by leaders has brought about significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils behave well. They are courteous and polite to one another and visitors. They feel safe in school.
- Determined leadership by school leaders and governors has brought about significant improvement in the school since the previous inspection.
- Pupil progress meetings help ensure that any pupils falling behind are provided with prompt, additional support. Together with better teaching, this results in increasingly good progress for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils sufficient guidance about how to improve their work. This is better in English than mathematics.
- Similar inconsistencies exist in the degree to which all pupils are provided with opportunities to use information and communication technology.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to take their own decisions about their learning, in particular, in deciding what they wish to learn and in making evaluations of their own and others' work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons, including visits to the Early Years Foundation Stage and a further seven sessions involving scrutinising pupils' work, guided reading and linking sounds to letters (phonics). Of these, four were joint observations with senior leaders.
- They listened to a sample of readers from Years 2, 3 and 5.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the online Parent View survey and one letter from a parent or carer. Questionnaires from 29 members of staff were also read.
- Discussions were held with senior and other leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, teaching assistants, pupils, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at progress and attainment data, the school's development plan, curriculum plans, governing body documentation, and policies and procedures. Those relating to health and safety and safeguarding of pupils were carefully scrutinised.

Inspection team

Michael Pye, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

David Curtis

Additional inspector

Phillip Mann

Additional inspector

Janet Simms

Additional inspector

Carol Worthington

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding for looked after children, children from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The main needs of these pupils relate to specific learning difficulties and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.
- The majority of pupils come from a predominantly White British background. The next largest minority ethnic group consists of pupils coming from an Any Other White background.
- In 2012 the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school, over the last two years, has experienced a large number of maternity leaves.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide clear messages to pupils about how they can improve their work when marking, especially in mathematics
 - provide regular opportunities for pupils, including the children in Reception, to use information and communication technology interactively.
- Maximise the opportunities for pupils to involve themselves more in deciding for themselves what they want to learn, and in evaluating their own and others' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- While attainment over the past four years has been high at the end of Year 6 progress over time has been inconsistent. This issue has been successfully overcome and pupils, including those few from minority ethnic backgrounds, are making good progress given their starting points.
- The analysis of assessment data and work seen during the inspection confirm a picture of high attainment. The majority of Year 6 pupils are on track to make good progress and attain standards similar to those of pupils in other years.
- Progress in reading is strong, with the very large majority of pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 making well above expected progress levels; others make good progress. This includes pupils for whom English is an additional language and also disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge above the levels expected for their age. They make good progress. The literacy learning journals show the best evidence of accelerated progress, for example, in pencil control, fine motor skills and in the formation of writing. They leave with particularly strong levels of personal and social development.
- The majority of parents and carers agree that pupils are making good progress. The great majority believe that good teaching contributes to this.
- The well-above attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2012 was also achieved by those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. These pupils made better progress and attained higher in writing than their peers, often as a consequence of good interventions and support. Based on their average points scores, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and in receipt of the pupil premium is well above average in English and mathematics across the school.
- The school's actions to develop boys' interest in writing have been successful. The gap almost closed in 2012 by the end of Year 6, and boys did slightly better than the girls in reading.
- Reading standards are average by the end of Year 2. Traditionally, they have been above average. The results of the phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 in 2012 were broadly at the expected levels. The school has introduced regular checking of pupils' phonics, and recent data is showing improved levels of understanding.
- Work scrutiny shows a tendency in Reception for some letters to be reversed and that this is not consistently picked up in teachers' marking.
- All groups of pupils are achieving which illustrates the school's successful commitment to equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding practice seen. Pupils' progress is correspondingly good. This results from teachers setting work that matches the needs of the pupils well. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, high-attaining pupils used their knowledge of number characteristics such as 'odd' or 'multiples of 3' to solve number puzzles. Middle attainers used money to cost out a variety of food from a menu. Lower attainers worked with an assistant to cost two items from the menu. This accurate match of work is also seen in the various intervention groups.
- Very positive relationships exist in lessons. In a Year 6 English lesson the pupils gave their views willingly about how to develop explanation texts. Using their water cycle project they highlighted the need for diagrams, clear instructions and 'opening and closing paragraphs'.
- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge. This was seen in a Year 3 'basic skills' lesson. Pupils benefited well from the teachers' use of subject vocabulary, highlighting patterns relating

to the use of the suffix.

- Occasionally, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching result in the rate of pupils' progress slowing. Pupils benefit from good resources and use information and communication technology, such as laptops and cameras. However, not all teachers use interactive technology to motivate and challenge pupils. For example, no interactive whiteboard was seen to be switched on for reception children to use during the inspection.
- Teachers' marking, overall, is good, with supportive comments and some valuable information given about the next steps in the pupils' learning. However, marking is not as helpful in some cases although it is stronger in English than in mathematics.
- In Reception the children showed a keenness to go outside during their 'Busy Time'. They showed good levels of respect during the reading of the Snow White story, listening carefully in silence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school fosters good relationships and from an early age the pupils relate well to adults and each other. In lessons and in the playground they behave well, show courtesy and are polite. The very large proportion of parents and carers who completed the online survey believe that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy being given responsibility. Year 6 monitors are on duty to greet and support and take to class any pupil feeling reluctant about coming to school. 'Worship' monitors from Year 6 help during collective worship. The peer mediators wear their sashes with pride.
- Pupils' moral and cultural development is well supported through the opportunities to carry out charity fund raising. Year 6 pupils made and presented a Comic Relief video to inform other pupils.
- The pupils evaluate their own work and there are increasing opportunities for them to respond to teachers' comments in marking. However, opportunities are lost to further develop an awareness of how best they and others learn, and their evaluation skills.
- Pupils say that while there are occasional incidents of name-calling there are few examples of bullying. They have a good understanding of what is meant by bullying, and talk about cyber-bullying. Anti-bullying week extends their knowledge, and pupils say that the school councillors, peer mediators and adults sort out any problems. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Approximately half of parents and carers completing the survey believed the school handles issues of bullying well. However a further 40% did not know, suggesting that they do not see bullying as an issue of concern.
- Pupils say they enjoy school. 'Teachers make lessons fun and exciting', was one pupil's comment. The above average attendance level appear to support this.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of risk, for example, during physical education lessons they are reminded about how to stay safe.
- The school analyses behaviour patterns thoroughly, and subsequently plans intervention and support strategies for individual pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her two assistant headteachers work very well together as a team. They have a clear vision for improving the school while retaining a Christian ethos and promoting the school values, such as independence and interdependence.
- Together they have overseen the development of a rigorous cycle of checks on the work of the school. This has included lesson observations. Teachers have benefited from some valuable

feedback on their lessons and good improvement has been the result.

- Subject coordinators have also contributed to improvement, and their work reflects the headteacher's strategy of distributing more responsibility and accountability. They observe lessons, carry out work scrutiny, conduct learning walks and speak to pupils about their area of responsibility.
 - This builds their knowledge of their subject and allows them to advise and provide training for staff to meet relevant development priorities. In mathematics this has resulted in a successful focus on problem-solving and in English, 'reading for pleasure'.
 - There are some minor issues to resolve in action planning; these relate to ensuring that all plans show how they support the priorities identified in the whole-school development plan and the consistency of benchmarking prior to actions being taken by leaders.
 - Positive staff questionnaires demonstrate how well the message of improvement has been shared.
 - Self-evaluation is rigorous. The school identified the need to develop a more challenging and engaging curriculum. This is a 'work-in-progress', but already the pupils are telling of enjoying their projects.
 - Within the curriculum there are excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Whole-school worship gives very appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect and contribute to their community.
 - Staff state that appraisal allows time to focus on their own careers as well as school targets, such as those for pupils' progress. Challenging targets are set, and pupils' progress is regularly reviewed during rigorous meetings.
 - They say that there are good levels of support for their professional development. This comes in the form of in-school training or from external agencies, such as the local cluster of schools.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
 - The local authority has given good support, particularly with regard to ensuring the accuracy of teachers' levelling of work and in their use of assessment and marking.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body carries out regular checking of the school's work, visiting regularly, talking to parents and carers, and receiving reports from subject leaders and the headteacher. Their understanding of assessment data is more secure as a consequence of local authority training. These actions enable them to raise questions of the school. They regularly review safeguarding, child protection and health and safety matters. Governors set challenging performance management targets and regularly review progress towards them. There is a clear expectation that promotion is linked to high-quality teaching and pupils' outcomes. They have a clear understanding of where the best teaching exists in the school and where it requires improvement. They carefully oversee the budget. The governors clearly understand which groups of pupils qualify for the pupil premium but they have only a growing knowledge of how effective the expenditure on these pupils is with regard to their attainment and progress.
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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	113840
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	401393

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	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Thorpe
Headteacher	Susan Lyonette
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 February 2010
Telephone number	01202 426696
Fax number	01202 433073
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