

Inspection of St James' Church of England Primary School

Guildford Road, Colchester, Essex CO1 2RA

Inspection dates: 18–19 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that their teachers want the best for them. Pupils told inspectors that teachers make learning interesting and fun.

Leaders provide lots of opportunities for pupils to understand the qualities needed to be a good learner. They support pupils to overcome challenges in their learning. As a result, pupils are able to stick at tasks even when they get difficult.

Pupils value the extra opportunities and clubs that are on offer. At lunchtimes, they enjoy exploring the 'scrap store' set up by the student council. In lessons, pupils behave well and work hard. This enables teachers to teach and pupils to learn in a productive, happy atmosphere.

Leaders make sure that resources match the needs of their pupils. Good examples of this are the newly built sensory room and the ark, which both provide appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

There are warm, respectful relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils trust that staff will keep them safe. Pupils develop the confidence to take risks in their learning.

Pupils say that bullying is very rare. They know that if it does happen adults will sort it out quickly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be developed. For example, leaders have taken the right steps to improve pupils' behaviour in lessons. There is little learning time lost through low-level disruption. Leaders have also improved the way in which subjects are planned and taught. In mathematics, there is a new scheme of learning which teachers are delivering well. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy their mathematics.

Curriculum leaders manage their subjects skilfully and support teachers effectively. Some curriculum leaders have not had enough opportunities to monitor how well the curriculum is taught and how this impacts on the quality of pupils' work.

Teachers have a good knowledge of each subject and how to teach them. Teachers make sure that learning activities build on things that pupils have learned previously. For example, when timelines are covered in history the learning becomes more challenging as pupils move through the school. In Year 2 pupils look at 1000-year steps. Year 6 pupils draw on previous learning to research and create their own timelines showing events leading to the First World War.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' physical and emotional well-being. Leaders have

created a curriculum that provides for the broader development of the pupils and not just the academic. Events such as health and well-being week help pupils to understand how to stay healthy. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy and they value the work of the student council.

Pupils with SEND are usually well supported in their learning. They make good progress through the curriculum. However, in mathematics some lack the confidence to 'give it a go'. Some adults do not provide pupils with the strategies they need to work independently. When adults check pupils' understanding and then encourage them to try things for themselves pupils usually succeed.

Leaders have placed great importance on pupils learning to read from an early age. All staff are well trained to teach phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). Adults are able to spot when pupils fall behind. Adults give pupils extra help where it is needed. Staff share a love of reading. This is seen in teachers' enthusiasm as they read stories to their pupils. Pupils told us that they enjoy reading the books that they take home.

In early years, children are enthusiastic about their learning. They trust, and feel well supported by, adults. Children enjoy their learning, and many are able to talk confidently about it. Children have the confidence to take risks. In Nursery, children were confident to climb high into a tree.

Children in early years make good progress through the reading and mathematics curriculum. This prepares them well for their move to key stage 1. Children who arrive at the school with very little knowledge of the English language are supported to catch up quickly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors place great emphasis on keeping children safe. All staff are well trained to identify and report any concerns they may have about a pupil's well-being. There are clear systems in place to make sure that any incidents are accurately recorded and followed through.

Leaders work well with experts from outside the school when more help is needed.

Pupils understand the importance of keeping themselves safe when using the internet and when playing in the local community. They are aware of the risks that they face.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While curriculum leaders manage their subjects well, a small number have not had enough opportunities to monitor how well the curriculum is taught and how this affects the quality of pupils' work. Senior leaders should share the good practice shown by many curriculum leaders to help others to develop their roles.
- When working with pupils with SEND some adults do not provide pupils with the strategies they need to work independently. Pupils can lack the confidence to try work for themselves and they become overdependent on the adult support. Leaders should ensure that the adults working with pupils with SEND give more appropriate support.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	143516
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10110184
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	452
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Simon Fenning
Headteacher	Belynda Fellows
Website	www.st-james-colchester.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school became a sponsored academy in September 2016 after the predecessor school was rated as inadequate in January 2016.
- The nursery provides provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors visited most classes, and were joined by senior leaders for some of these visits.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in 35 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked through a range of books and work across most year groups.
- Inspectors paid particular attention to the quality of education in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, music, computing and history.
- Inspectors met with leaders, governors, parents and teachers. Inspectors looked at the school's development plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation

in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils, observed them at playtimes and lunchtimes and listened to them read their books.
- Responses from 91 pupils and 16 staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaires were considered.

Inspection team

Nick Templeton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
James Richards	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Capper	Ofsted Inspector

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