

# Inspection of St James' CofE Primary School

Vicarage Road, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 2QN

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Respectful, caring and supportive relationships are at the heart of the school. An overwhelming sense of community greets you as you arrive. Pupils are happy in school. Pupils support each other's needs. This begins at the school gate, when Year 6 pupils meet with their 'buddy' in Reception. Pupils enjoy their time with Arlo, the school therapy dog. Pupils are safe and they say that poor behaviour is rare.

Pupils achieve exceptionally well through their learning. Leaders maintain high expectations across the curriculum. Remembering key knowledge is a focus in every subject. Pupils respond to these high expectations with enthusiasm and they excel. Pupils appreciate their teachers. They know that teachers want them to be successful in their learning.

Leaders place an exceptionally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils can explain clearly their understanding of fundamental British values such as democracy. Pupils have many opportunities to develop leadership roles. Pupil leaders organise sports activities, productions and a tuck shop. The 'Worship Crew' successfully help to organise assemblies. The majority of pupils take part in an extensive range of high-quality enrichment opportunities. Construction, 'sing for fun' and mindfulness clubs enhance pupils' wider experiences.

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

There is exceptional leadership of the school. Leaders have designed a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum encourages and enables pupils to achieve their academic potential. Pupils also develop their emotional well-being and cultural knowledge. In all classes, including the early years, positive relationships between staff, pupils, parents and carers help pupils to be confident and happy.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils. In turn, pupils show an enthusiasm for learning. Staff know and teach their subjects extremely well. This enables pupils to gain and remember new knowledge successfully. Pupils confidently talk about what they know and understand in a range of subjects. In art, Year 6 pupils explained how their choice of colour and technique was being used to create a realistic image of water. They could link this with previous learning around paints and texture.

Leaders quickly identify all pupils who may need additional support. This includes pupils with SEND. Every pupil follows the same curriculum. Teachers adapt their teaching effectively so that pupils with SEND can access learning. Staff provide pupils with effective, targeted support. This helps pupils successfully improve their subject knowledge.

Developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is at the heart of pupils' learning. This enables pupils to develop these skills securely. All pupils are enthusiastic about

reading. They enjoy the many opportunities to read to an adult or by themselves. They read a broad and diverse range of fiction and non-fiction texts fluently and with understanding. Leaders identify any pupils with weak literacy as soon as they join the school. Precise and effective sequencing of phonics teaching ensures that pupils learn the right sounds at the right time. Staff make sure that books match the sounds that pupils learn. Those pupils who need help to catch up receive support quickly. This helps pupils read with confidence and enthusiasm.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils from different year groups get along well with each other. Pupils from Reception and key stage 1 pair with key stage 2 pupils. They organise many events throughout the year. For example, Reception and Year 3 pupils lead the Nativity productions. Year 2 and Year 5 pupils work together on the Easter Service. As a result, relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are highly respectful. All of this means that pupils enjoy coming to school and say they are part of 'one big happy family'.

Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is a high priority in the school. All pupils spoken to have a detailed understanding of healthy relationships and respecting the views of others. Pupils have many opportunities to voice their opinions about the school, which leaders act on. For example, pupils suggest many of the enrichment activities that are then adopted. This encourages a strong sense of belonging. Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs, including sports, music and science. Pupils appreciate educational trips. These include a visit to a mosque in Birmingham as well as a Year 6 residential week in Liverpool.

Governors know the school exceptionally well. They support and challenge leaders in meetings and in their link visits to the school. For example, each subject leader has a link governor who reviews and questions the curriculum. Governors hold leaders to account for safeguarding and the quality of SEND provision. There is a shared passion across governors, leaders and the wider staff to develop the school further.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise the safety and well-being of pupils. Staff quickly identify pupils who may need help and protection from the risk of harm. They recognise that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. Where staff have concerns, there are precise processes to record and inform leaders. Leaders take swift action if needed. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff to work with pupils.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. This includes e-safety around passwords and when sharing images online. Leaders ensure that help for pupils and families is always available.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116885
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269112
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Reverend Andy Morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ben Caldicott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjamesceschool.org">www.stjamesceschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- St James' C of E Primary School is part of the dioceses of Herefordshire. The school received its last section 48 inspection of church schools on 1 December 2021.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors focused on the following deep dives: early reading, mathematics, art and design, and history. Inspectors considered the curriculum and visited lessons. They heard pupils read to a familiar adult, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also looked at how incidents that are reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the local authority and the local diocese. They also met with governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. Inspectors also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Stuart Clarkson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Hines

Ofsted Inspector

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