



St James' CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116903
LEA Worcestershire
Inspection number 279939
Inspection dates 21 March 2006 to 21 March 2006
Reporting inspector Rashida Sharif HMI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | West Malvern Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Malvern |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | Worcestershire WR14 4BB |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01684 561207 |
| Number on roll | 78 | Fax number | 01684 563 547 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mrs Liz Senior |
| Date of previous inspection | 14 February 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Karen Surrall |

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average Church of England school situated in the village of West Malvern. The majority of the pupils are of White British origin. When pupils enter the school their standards are at least in line with what is expected for their age. The majority of the pupils live within walking distance of the school. The number of pupils entitled to receive free school meals and the proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St James' CofE Primary School is a good school and a welcoming and confident community committed to Christian values where the principles of social justice and equality are promoted. It gives good value for money. All pupils are highly motivated and they make good progress. Standards are exceptionally high by the end of Year 6, but handwriting and presentation could be improved throughout the school. Teaching and learning are good for pupils of all ages, but assessment is not carried out in a consistent way, particularly in Reception and in mathematics. Nevertheless, provision is good in Reception and pupils make good progress. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and they receive a high level of personal care from all staff. The curriculum is effective, but resources for information and communication technology (ICT) need updating.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and understands its strengths and weaknesses, though her initial evaluation of the effectiveness was modest. The school's priorities for improvement are accurate and provide a good basis for further development. Governors support and challenge the school well. It has improved well since the last inspection and it has a good capacity to improve further. The headteacher provides good leadership and effectively communicates her high expectations to all staff. Self-evaluation and planning for further improvement are satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are good and teachers are given detailed feedback as to what they need to do to further develop their teaching. The headteacher monitors pupils' progress very well. However, other teachers do not have sufficient involvement in monitoring the school's work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Involve all teachers in monitoring and evaluating the school's work.
- Implement plans to improve the provision in ICT throughout the school.
- Ensure a common approach across the school to assessing and marking pupils' work so that pupils know what they need to do to further improve.
- Improve all pupils' handwriting and presentation skills in all age groups

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement overall is good. They make good progress in each year group. Many of the pupils reach high standards and achieve challenging targets. Most children enter school at least in line with the national expectation in all areas of learning. They settle quickly and make good progress through Reception. Standards at the end of Year 2 have recently varied from year to year because of small numbers of pupils, but last year standards in tests were above average. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make good progress.

Though progress in English, mathematics and science is strong, there are some areas in which pupils are not doing quite so well. Handwriting is a minor weakness, and progress in ICT is not as rapid.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupil's personal development is good. They understand school and class rules and behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning are good, as is their attendance. They enjoy the weekly awards system and the responsibilities shared by the school council and weekly prefects. Pupils have good opportunities to be reflective and show good care and support for each other. The school council is consulted and involved in the appointment of new staff. Pupils are aware of a range of world cultures and religions which are reflected in displays around the school. Pupils' very good behaviour and all-round personal development result from the school's well planned provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have good empathy with others. Among the poems displayed, a rap poem, 'If you wanna know what bullying is, just listen to this rhyme', shows the high level of understanding of older pupils in this project.

Pupils work and play in a safe environment. They develop good awareness of healthy lifestyles through discussions in class. All classes enjoy a regular daily fruit break. Pupils make enthusiastic use of climbing apparatus in the school grounds, as well as having weekly access to local sports facilities. Staff have focused recently on developing pupils' ability to work independently and collaboratively. The effectiveness of this work has contributed strongly towards pupils developing skills that will help prepare them for the next stage in their education and for adult life. However, some out of date ICT resources are a minor limitation in their preparation for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the Reception class and in Years 1 to 6 is good. Pupils learn successfully because teachers maintain good relationships with them, manage their classes well and plan and prepare lessons thoroughly. They listen attentively and understand what they have to do because teachers give instructions clearly. They show readiness to answer questions and collaborate with each other in small groups as a result of teachers encouraging them to articulate their thoughts and negotiate. Pupils enjoy lessons because they proceed at a brisk pace and tasks are well matched to their abilities.

Teachers share targets with pupils in their writing books and use 'Walt' (We are learning to..) and Success Criteria (Remember to..) to help pupils know the focus of lessons in a range of subjects. However, the school is aware that it does not yet have a co-ordinated approach to assess how well pupils are progressing in mathematics or in

areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. It is tackling this to raise further the quality of teaching and improve pupils' understanding of what they need to do to make better progress through marking that helps them to know what they need to do to further improve their work. The school is aware that they now need to look to helping pupils with their presentation and handwriting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good, broad and balanced curriculum. In Reception children's interest is stimulated through local walks and a range of practical activities which help them enjoy their learning and make good progress. Pupils commented on how much they enjoyed making animals and creatures out of sticks on their recent visit to the local woods.

The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is well planned. Pupils enjoy learning because the curriculum has a range of unusual and interesting features. Regular, timetabled visits to the local adventurous activity centre support pupils' personal, social and physical development. Regular visits to the Church and a recent visit to a Birmingham Gurdwara and Mandir help pupils' spiritual development and also help them to gain knowledge and understanding of the variety of cultures and religions in British society. The school is aware that resources for ICT need updating and that staff need training to support the introduction of improved ICT facilities. The governors are currently discussing the purchase of more update equipment.

The school provides a good range of additional activities that help pupils further develop their personal hobbies and interests. For example, pupils have been involved in planning and developing an exciting project, which will help to contribute to their environmental study programme. This entailed putting up the willow structures in the school grounds that have a stunning effect on visitors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils in all classes benefit from the school's good arrangements for care, guidance and support. All requirements for child protection and health and safety are in place. Pupils feel safe. They know who to turn to for help and are confident in talking to their teachers and assistants about any problem. Pupils' work on bullying in Years 5 and 6 is successful in heightening their awareness of the need to show care, respect and empathy for each other.

The school provides good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, deploying teaching assistants well. External agencies provide effective additional support where needed. Systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress are not yet sharp enough to allow teachers to give good guidance to pupils on how to make faster progress.

There are good opportunities for children and parents to become familiar with the school before they start. Both parents and pupils receive clear information to help them make choices of secondary schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management and the school's capacity to improve are good. The headteacher knows the school well. She has very high aspirations and is a strong leader, inspiring the loyalty of governors, staff and parents and the affection of the pupils.

Monitoring and evaluation of assessment information is used rigorously to track how well all pupils are making progress towards achieving their targets. There is a systematic programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. These are currently being undertaken by the headteacher and there is insufficient involvement of other teachers in core subjects. Governors influence the school's work productively. They visit the school regularly and have a good understanding of its strengths and areas of further development. Finances are well managed and the budget links well to school improvement priorities. The school provides good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the good quality of leadership and management means that the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 3 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

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|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and for being so friendly and helpful. We particularly want to thank the members of the school council who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We really enjoyed talking to you and visiting your school. You are very polite and helpful and I can see why you like coming to school. You get on well with each other and the adults who look after you. Thank you for sharing your ideas and your work with us and telling us what you enjoy about your school. I think you are making a really good job with your willow structures and the nature garden.

To make your school even better we have asked Mrs Surrall and your governors to do what they can to provide you with up-to-date computers. We have asked your teachers to make sure their marking tells you how to improve your work and to give you more help to improve your writing and presentation skills. We have also asked all teachers to check regularly on the progress you are making.

I think that you are very lucky to be at your school and that you have lots of opportunities to do exciting things in your lessons and after school. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.