

# St James' Church of England Aided Infant School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112915
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	289463
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Broadbent

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	80
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Frank Ault
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Carter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2002
<b>School address</b>	Leonard Street Derby DE23 8EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 363091
<b>Fax number</b>	

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-7
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 March 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	289463

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day.

## Description of the school

This small school serves an area of high social and economic disadvantage. Almost half the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is well above average. There is a high level of mobility with many pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the year. Well above average numbers of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The two largest groups have Pakistani or White British backgrounds while small numbers come from nineteen different minority ethnic groups. Twenty-one different languages are spoken reflecting an increasing and very varied cultural mix. A very high proportion of pupils are at the very beginning of learning English when they start school. Above average proportions of pupils have learning difficulties. Children enter the Nursery when they are three with skills that are well below those expected nationally, although this varies each year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents are right to be pleased with this good school which makes sure that their children achieve well given their different starting points and needs. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors, know the school's strengths accurately and what can be improved and are determined to make the school even better. Since the last inspection they have made good improvements to governance, the curriculum and assessments of pupils' work. But, the improvements to the building and learning environment for the Foundation Stage children are outstanding. They have the vision, determination and a good capacity to fulfil their aspirations for the school.

Over time standards in mathematics have been above average at the end of Year 2 and a significant number of pupils reach levels above those expected for their age. Since 2005, standards have dipped in reading and writing because most children start school with lower skills especially in communication, language and literacy. Standards are now slightly above average in reading and below average in writing. The school is working hard to ensure that their success in improving standards in reading is also successful in improving standards in writing.

Teaching is good because it is usually focused on ensuring that pupils learn as well as they can. There are examples of outstanding teaching too which inspires pupils. However, good teaching is not always found throughout the school and this leads to uneven progress which is rapid at times and slows when teaching is unsatisfactory, especially in writing. A recently introduced electronic assessment system allows senior staff to identify rates of progress even more efficiently. They generally take effective action to ensure that pupils catch up so that by the end of Reception and Year 2, pupils' progress is good. Pupils at the early stages of learning English do well through the additional support provided. Those with learning, behavioural or emotional needs and vulnerable pupils are constantly kept under review. They are supported effectively by a learning mentor and teaching assistants.

Good standards of care, support and guidance help to develop pupils' personal skills well. Pupils learn to respect, enjoy and celebrate the rich variety of faiths and cultures represented in the school. Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and behave well because the good curriculum offers a wide range of interesting activities. This provides opportunities to work in groups and prepares pupils well for the next school and their future lives and economic well-being. The school council provides regular opportunities for pupils to contribute to school improvements. The children choose to eat healthily from the school's healthy eating menu. They know how to keep themselves healthy, fit and safe. The school's procedures for ensuring regular attendance and punctuality are rigorous, effective and help pupils to make the most of their time in school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement further by ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good across all subjects.
- Enable all teachers to use the new system for checking pupil's progress and ensure that they use the information in planning the next steps in pupils' learning so that progress is consistently good.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Although pupils' achievement is good the rate of progress varies in both key stages. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and by the end of the Reception class, children make good progress. Most reach below average skills for their age, although some do better than this because they had higher starting points. Children make most progress in communication, language and literacy which is vital for their future learning. In Key Stage 1 progress is good. After a slow start in Year 1 progress accelerates rapidly in Year 2 and pupils reach average standards. In the 2006 teacher assessments pupils did well in mathematics and standards were above average. Standards in reading improved and were slightly above average. In both reading and mathematics an above average percentage of pupils reached levels that were better than expected for their age. In writing standards dipped and the school is working hard to improve this.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils enjoy learning and they work well together. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The playground is a happy place where children from different races and backgrounds play harmoniously because they learn to respect cultural and religious differences. They learn how to make new pupils feel welcome. They encourage those who are new to learning English to join in their games through gesture, laughter and plenty of smiles. They know how to keep themselves safe and sensibly seek the help of an adult when needed. Pupils are discerning and explain the difference between a bully and those who lack maturity and are unkind occasionally. There is very little bullying, but pupils say that if it happens, staff deal with it effectively. The school council helps pupils to take on responsibilities and staff act upon their ideas to improve the outdoor play areas. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and enjoy opportunities for energetic play and exercise to keep fit.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good but this quality is not consistent throughout the school. The majority of lessons are well planned, based on accurate assessments of pupils' needs and with activities that are well matched to them. Lessons are focused on challenging targets for groups or individuals. They ensure that pupils learn through exciting activities that meet their interests and their next steps in learning. Occasionally learning slows when lessons are not well planned or taught effectively enough, progress is limited especially in writing. This happens when tasks are repetitive, build insufficiently on pupils' prior learning and marking is ineffective in helping pupils to improve. The school overcomes this by planning short focused sessions with teaching assistants, support staff and the learning mentor. They provide good quality support using activities and resources matched closely to pupils' very different learning needs. As a result, pupils progress consistently at a good rate, because learning is highly effective.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection. It is broad, balanced and has a good programme of personal, social and health education which helps pupils to be safe. Programmes of work include lots of practical tasks and activities that help pupils to learn effectively. In the Foundation Stage children were enthralled when chickens hatched from eggs in an incubator. This was used very effectively to develop language, writing and observational skills as well as pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils benefit from educational visits and say how much they enjoy visitors to school, especially when they have music and art days. Key skills are well promoted throughout the curriculum and pupils have good opportunities to use computers to help them learn.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is committed to nurturing pupils in a safe and secure environment that helps to develop their confidence. The school meets the latest statutory guidance concerning safeguarding. The close team work of staff and good links with other agencies allows support to be tailored to the needs of pupils. The school day builds in time for children to select their dinner from the menu and for parents to settle them into their class. Everyone is then calm and prepared well for learning. Pupils are set challenging targets especially at the end of each key stage. These are shared and agreed with parents who are given guidance to help them support their child's learning at home.

Following the last inspection, the school developed good systems for checking pupils' work and progress. A new electronic assessment system is building upon this and is effectively used by senior staff to identify and intervene swiftly to provide support if a child is at risk of underachieving. But the school knows that this needs to be used by all staff effectively in order to improve their planning and the guidance given to pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has successfully shared her vision to give pupils the best start possible and improve their achievement. The school improvement plan sensibly identifies a manageable number of priorities, which all contribute to improving learning and raising achievement. This aim is well supported by staff and governors. The headteacher and senior staff, who are also subject leaders, have contributed much to raising standards in reading and improving the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage. The school works well with parents, who find the school welcoming and supportive. Staff listen to parents views, act on them when it is appropriate and provide feedback following annual questionnaires. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They have re-organised their work so that committees make more effective and efficient contributions to school improvement. They make regular visits and know how well pupils are achieving and the standards they reach and what needs to be improved. They have taken an active role in ensuring pupils are safe by driving forward building work to resolve issues of health and safety.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 March 2007

Dear Children

St James CE (VA) Infant and Nursery School, Leonard Street, Derby DE23 8EG

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I would like to share with you what I think about your school.

The headteacher, staff and governors are all working hard to make your good school even better. You help too, through the school council, by letting the adults know what you would like improved. I hope that your new playground design will be completed before the summer. You also help by getting on so well with each other. You work hard in lesson and enjoy your playtimes. It was good to see you help other children who were beginning to learn to speak English.

Your teachers do a lot to make learning fun and interesting. Thank you for showing me the chickens that hatched from eggs in the incubator in the Foundation Stage. Wasn't it wonderful to watch them? You told me how much you enjoy using the computers to help you learn. The educational visits you make and visitors to school are also very popular.

I have asked the school to work on some things that they know will help your school be even better. I have asked them to make sure that teaching is always good. I have also asked the headteacher to make sure that everyone uses the new system for checking how well you are learning and then to help you make good progress all the time.

Once again thank you for your help and I hope that things continue to get even better.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Gill Broadbent Lead inspector