

## Crigglestone St James Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108250
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	309635
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Pattinson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	291
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Canon Ian Gaskell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Colleen Gibson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	St James' Way Crigglestone Wakefield West Yorkshire WF4 3HY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 303540
<b>Fax number</b>	01924 303542

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school to the south of Wakefield. Most pupils are of White British heritage and live in the immediate area. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and from minority ethnic groups are much lower than the national averages. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the term in which they become five. Since the last inspection, the school has achieved the Investors in Pupils award, a national Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Award, a Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time. It is a Regional Centre for Gifted and Talented pupils.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

St James is an outstanding school, which gives its pupils an excellent education. In this inclusive setting, with its very positive climate for learning, pupils flourish. Parents overwhelmingly support the school and appreciate all that it provides. 'I have nothing but good things to say about St James – it is the kind of school that every parent wants to send their child to,' is a typical parental comment. This is because the headteacher is an inspirational leader who has the highest possible aspirations for the school and its pupils. She has, together with her highly skilled and extremely hard-working senior leaders, built a staff that is totally committed to school improvement and staff strive for excellence in all that they do. As a result, priorities for development are ruthlessly pursued and rigorously evaluated. All involved with the school feel valued and make important contributions to its outstanding work.

When children start school in Reception, their knowledge and understanding is above what is typical. They learn very well through a variety of practical and interesting activities both in and out-of-doors. Standards are high throughout school and in all subjects. Achievement among all groups, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with special gifts and talents, is excellent. This is due to the excellent teaching and support pupils receive and the school's very accurate and rigorous assessment procedures. As a result, the needs of pupils with different capabilities are met extremely well.

Pupils benefit significantly from the high quality teaching and learning, which is underpinned by excellent relationships. However, occasionally the pace of lessons is not brisk enough to secure the fastest possible learning. Pupils love school because the curriculum is organised in exciting, creative and innovative ways to help bring learning alive, such as by breaking down barriers between subjects. All pupils usually make outstanding progress in lessons because of the considerable emphasis on learning through first-hand experiences and the importance given to discussion, thinking and reasoning. Many visits and visitors add further quality and enrich pupils' experiences. As a result, the school makes a very effective contribution to the development of community cohesion.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They behave extremely well and have very positive attitudes. They are confident and are always keen to do their best. They often show initiative, such as through the work of the school council, which makes a significant contribution to school life. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's work. Pupils adopt healthy and safe lifestyles because these important areas are given considerable emphasis. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and fully meet current requirements. There are very good arrangements for guiding pupils on their academic performance which involve pupils very well so that they have much ownership of what they must do to improve. Because the school makes effective use of its resources and the many different skills of its work force, it provides excellent value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children settle quickly into the Reception class and flourish in the very nurturing environment where they feel safe, secure and valued. All staff have high expectations and children really rise to the challenge. They make very rapid progress in all areas of learning, but especially in

language, communication and thinking, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because they are very strongly encouraged to explore things for themselves and to ask questions through the wide range of stimulating learning activities. In fact, many children are so enthused with their learning that they are really keen to do work at home of their own initiative, proudly sharing their accomplishments with the class. Teachers skilfully ensure that there is a very good balance, both indoors and outdoors, between activities organised by them and those initiated by children themselves. An example of the excellent leadership can be seen in the very thorough assessments, which ensure that learning activities meet the needs and interests of the children very well. As a result, transition into Key Stage 1 is smooth and seamless. Parents are very appreciative, typically commenting: 'The school's reputation leads us to have very high expectations, which have been met. My child loves school!'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that the pace of lessons is always brisk enough to sustain the excellent progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Achievement for all groups of pupils including those with gifts and talents and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Children enter the EYFS with skills, knowledge and understanding above that normally expected for their age. Reliable and accurate assessments show that children make very rapid progress through EYFS, and then through Key Stage 1. By age 7 pupils' attainment is consistently and significantly high in reading and mathematics and is particularly strong in writing. This has been the case for a number of years. Standards reached in the national tests at age 11 are well above average overall, and exceptionally high in mathematics. Standards have been significantly above average over a period of time, and pupils' progress has been equally strong. Challenging targets are rigorously pursued and progress towards their achievement regularly evaluated, which contributes to the well above average standards achieved and ensures that all are challenged to do as well as they can. Inspection evidence shows that standards are maintained throughout the school and are at similarly high levels in different year groups, and in other subjects.

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

### **Grade: 1**

'We are the children of St James school. We take pride in the things we do. Learning together and having fun. Who's for a good day? Everyone!' , 1998. The words of the school song summarise well what the school is all about. The school's Golden Rules serve to create an extremely positive atmosphere where all are valued. As a result, pupils love school, which is reflected in the consistently well above average attendance, and classrooms 'buzz' with purposeful activity. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is underpinned by the strong, inclusive climate and supported through high quality curriculum initiatives. Pupils are extremely well behaved and show high levels of care and concern for others. They gain immensely from a strong partnership with a school in the locality, developing a very good understanding and respect for the culture and beliefs of others. Pupils clearly know how to stay safe, fit and healthy. They grow, cook and eat their own vegetables and greatly enjoy participating in a very wide range of sporting activities, often with the support of specialist sports coaches. Pupils show considerable initiative, express their views with confidence and listen carefully to the opinions of others. In overseeing

the development of an attractive memorial garden, the school council under the guidance of the bursar managed a substantial budget, considered several tenders for the work and reported to the governing body. This emphasis on high quality teamwork, alongside the excellent rates of progress in basic skills prepares pupils extremely well for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers make an excellent contribution to pupils' outstanding achievement and the high standards they reach. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils, as shown by a typical parental comment, 'Teachers and children have mutual respect, which provides the basis for them to learn.' All staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and show high levels of enthusiasm. As a result, classrooms are lively, exciting places where pupils are very motivated and learn a great deal. Investigation and questioning are used well to develop and check understanding and provoke thought. However, in a very small number of lessons, the pace is not fast enough to ensure that pupils make their usual outstanding progress. All pupils, and particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, benefit from the high quality support provided by the committed teaching assistants. Furthermore, very effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress underpin lesson planning and give staff the necessary information to match work precisely to pupils' abilities in most lessons. As a result, all pupils make outstanding progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school's exciting and creative curriculum is outstanding. Based around six themes and after consultation with parents, pupils, governors and all staff, it has been developed to help pupils make best possible progress. Clear evaluation of achievements is linked closely to the step-by-step planning to enable senior staff to measure the rate of progress. All pupils in Key Stage 2 study a modern foreign language. Music and art lessons are high quality and food technology and philosophy are innovative features. The curriculum promotes community cohesion very effectively. The school's personal development programme and work in assemblies contributes exceptionally well to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for numeracy and literacy is underpinned by planned links between subjects. Skills learned in one subject are being reinforced by their practical application in others. This is bringing learning to life. A very strong focus on finding out why things are as they are is securing pupils' investigative skills in science. Regular presentations to classmates improve pupils' already very good ICT skills and further develop understanding. A wide range of well supported clubs and activities including sport and cultural activities, and a wide variety of trips and visitors to the school, helps to further extend pupils' learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The inclusive climate in the school creates a very nurturing environment. Pupils feel very safe and secure, agreeing that, 'People here sort out any problems.' Safeguarding arrangements are high priority in the school's work and meet requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a particular gift or talent are extremely well supported because

their individual needs are very carefully diagnosed. Pupils benefit enormously from the extremely strong links forged with other schools and agencies. Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to pupils' achievement. They develop areas of expertise to ensure that support is well targeted. Academic guidance is equally effective. This is because pupils, parents and teachers work in close partnerships to negotiate targets for improvement. Pupils regularly evaluate how well they are doing and say their targets show them how to improve their work. Parents say they feel very well informed about their children's progress through the recently improved reports, which provide clear guidance on pupils' performance and areas for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding and are key factors in the school's continued success. The headteacher, ably supported by a very strong leadership team, has played a pivotal role in maintaining the school's high standards since the last inspection. She knows the school very well and this is reflected in the school's accurate self-evaluation, which takes account of staff, governors, parents and pupils.

Despite its considerable strengths and achievements, this is not a school that is happy to 'rest on its reputation'. It has demonstrated how it rigorously and effectively tackles areas of relative weakness, indicating an excellent capacity for further improvement. Morale in the school is high and teamwork is a real strength. For example, all staff play a crucial role in monitoring the school's work and performance. The headteacher's 'recruit to grow' philosophy provides evidence of the considerable importance given to professional development to help drive up standards. Leadership is further enhanced by the governors of the school, who are supportive yet challenging and play an increasing part in holding the school to account and acting as critical friends.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

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**Annex B**

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

Inspection of Crigglestone St James Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School, Wakefield, WF4 3HY

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you very much for making our visit so enjoyable and for taking time to talk to us and to answer our questions. We thought that you would like to hear what we found out about your school. After our inspection we came to the conclusion that you go to an outstanding school which takes exceptional care of you.

There are many excellent things happening in your school.

- All of you make outstanding progress and reach high standards by the time you leave.
- You love school because teachers, teaching assistants, visits, visitors and special events make learning interesting and often exciting.
- You get on well with one another and your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers and other adults help you when you have problems, make sure that you are safe and give you very good advice about your work.
- Your headteacher is an excellent headteacher and together with all staff makes sure that you are happy and very successful in school.

As you go to such a brilliant school there is not much that could be even better than it is now! However, we have asked your teachers to check that they are always using time well in lessons to make sure that you are always making best possible progress.

It was so good to find that all of you are very happy at school and doing so well, and that your parents appreciate and value your school so highly.

Keep working hard and enjoying life at St James.