

Prospects Learning Services Ltd  
132-138 High Street  
Bromley  
Kent  
BR1 1EZ

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 020 8313 7760  
Direct F 020 8464 3393



6 March 2008

Mrs Nina Panayis  
The Acting Headteacher  
St James' CofE Junior School  
Tower Hamlets Road  
Forest Gate  
London  
E7 9DA

Dear Mrs Panayis

### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF ST JAMES' CofE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Following my visit to your school on 27 and 28 February 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in February 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring visit – good

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to contact with HMI.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Diocese of Chelmsford and the Director for Children and Young People's Services for Newham.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF ST JAMES' CofE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Report from the third monitoring inspection: 27 and 28 February 2008

### Evidence

During the visit 10 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Pupils were observed around the school. Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, a range of middle and senior managers, pupils from the school council, the chair of governors, and the school improvement partner. A range of school documents were scrutinised.

### Context

Three members of staff have left the school since the last monitoring inspection. At the time of this visit, two teaching posts were being covered by supply teachers. The school hopes to interview and appoint candidates to these posts by the beginning of the summer term. The governing body and local authority (LA) are currently exploring the possibility of appointing an executive headteacher for St James and a neighbouring school.

### Achievement and standards

School data currently suggest that standards throughout the school are rising. This is due to the improvements in leadership and management, rigorous use of data to inform planning and teaching that caters for the needs of all pupils. Overall, standards remain well below national expectations, but during this monitoring inspection many pupils observed in the core subjects, particularly the more able, were producing work of a standard at least in line with national expectations, and occasionally above.

Progress made by pupils in the lessons observed demonstrates that achievement continues to improve at a satisfactory rate overall. The rate of progress pupils make between classes, a weakness noted during the last monitoring visit is more consistent, reflecting some of the improvements made in teaching. Pupils in six out of the ten lessons observed made good progress because of good teaching.

The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Many of the pupils' ability to analyse and evaluate texts is improving, as is their use of literary vocabulary. The organisation of extended writing demonstrates a more systematic approach to the planning of written work and there is evidence of increasing opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subject, for example, in history.

The recently appointed co-ordinator of provision for pupils with English as an Additional Language is making a real difference. For example, she has assessed pupils, has a timetable of support organised on a six week block for each year group and is enhancing links with parents.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science – satisfactory.

- Increase opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subject areas – satisfactory.

## Personal development and well-being

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and this aspect continues to be a strong feature of the school. Pupils enjoy their time at St James and show interest and enthusiasm for learning. Clear expectations of conduct lead to good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils speak about their school as a place where they feel safe and have someone to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils' attitude in the upper Key Stage 2 classes is particularly good; they are welcoming and courteous to visitors, listen attentively and ask thoughtful questions. During group work, pupils work together co-operatively and maintain their concentration and interest. When teachers call the class together their response is instant. Despite a small number of lessons being dull, pupils make every effort to concentrate and follow their teacher's instructions. When working in groups and pairs, pupils co-operate well and shared equipment sensibly.

## Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and this has resulted in pupils making more progress than they have in the recent past. The school has worked hard in continuing to improve the quality of teaching and is well supported by the Local Authority with the provision of extra consultant time. Overall, the majority of teachers are now demonstrating a marked degree of confidence in organising and structuring their lessons. All classrooms are organised well to support pupils' independent learning. The cultural diversity of the school is reflected in displays and resources, for example, the majority of classes have displays on 'language of the month'.

Planning has improved and is far more consistent from lesson to lesson. There is generally a clear reference to learning objectives and expected outcomes. Teachers are beginning to be explicit about the learning that will take place. Some very good and exciting teaching was observed in Year 5 when for example, pupils made exceptional progress in acquiring knowledge relating to the rhythm and structure of poetry. Similarly, in Year 3 the teacher's high expectations and high quality exposition enabled all groups to make good progress.

Some better questioning techniques are starting to be seen which assess, support and extend pupils' learning, but this good feature is not consistent. In some lessons it is still too easy for pupils to disengage because the teacher does not target questions to individuals but relies on volunteers putting their hands up. Some teachers accept pupils' responses to questions which are often brief and expressed in partial sentences.

A good system of assessment is in place to record information on pupils' learning, which is well understood and used by the senior leadership team. The senior leaders meet with each teacher termly to discuss individual pupils' progress. Underachieving pupils are identified and intervention programmes implemented.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Improve the consistency and demand of teaching and learning throughout the school – good
- Track the progress of pupils more closely and set more challenging targets – good.

### Leadership and management

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and knows the school well because of rigorous and systematic monitoring of teaching, learning and achievement. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and staff and there is a clear sense of collective responsibility and teamwork. The headteacher is receiving good support especially from her senior team who are growing in confidence and increasingly providing the necessary support and leadership to others in the school. The focus for all managers is now very clearly on improving the quality of teaching and learning and thus the standards achieved by pupils. Effective subject leadership, including the first class management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties is leading to improved standards. The governing body, well led by the chair of governors, has received training resulting in greater understanding of what the school is doing to improve and how to find out. The challenge for the school now is to ensure that the increased rate of improvement seen on this visit is maintained and that the good practice is embedded across the work of the school.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Ensure that all those with leadership and management roles can properly account for the standards of pupils' work and the quality of educational provision within their areas of responsibility – good

### External support

The LA continues to provide good specialist support for a number of subjects, in particular mathematics and literacy. This is judiciously delivered to take account of improvements made and to address remaining areas of weakness. The LA should now ensure that the school receives the closest possible support in the collaboration between stakeholders on all aspects regarding the future of the school.