

# St James' CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116903
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326481
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	87
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>	Paul Seymour
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Surrall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 March 2006
<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>	West Malvern Road Malvern WR14 4BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 561207
<b>Fax number</b>	01684 563547

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## Introduction

- The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:
- the strengths of the provision that account for the high standards in reading
- the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning
- the extent to which the school promotes community cohesion.

The inspectors gathered evidence from observations of lessons, discussions with pupils, governors and staff, tracking pupils' progress, analysis of attendance and gaining the views of parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school but numbers are increasing steadily. Compared with most schools, few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Nearly all are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to most schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school at the very heart of the village community. Parents are fully justified in seeing the school as a place where their children flourish and enjoy learning. They particularly appreciate the 'strongly developed community spirit' that makes their children feel part of a close-knit family. An important reason for the school's success lies in the leadership and management, particularly by the headteacher, who juggles the roles of leader and teacher very skilfully. The leaders' rigorous self-evaluation systems are based securely on accurate assessment of pupils' skills, regular checks on the quality of teaching and effective action to rectify weaknesses. This explains why the school has made such good improvement since the last inspection and why it is set to do even better. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Parents rightly feel that the teaching is good. Typical lessons see teachers firing pupils' enthusiasm with imaginative tasks that expect much of their skills. Teachers make lessons fun by including many opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT). For example, pupils really enjoy activities such as exploring topics in depth using the internet and making video films of their practical investigations. The teaching of English is a significant strength, because teachers are very good at setting pupils of all abilities challenges that make the best of their talents. As a result, standards are exceptionally high throughout the school. Standards in writing, mathematics and science are consistently above average in both key stages, and this represents good progress from pupils' broadly average starting points. However, more able pupils could sometimes do even better if they were given more opportunities to plan their own mathematical and scientific investigations.

Pupils are adamant that they 'really love school', and they say the best thing about it is the 'very caring staff who always know when you are happy or upset'. They feel safe because bullying is rare and staff take excellent care of them. All arrangements for safeguarding children meet legal requirements and are monitored closely by the competent, well-informed governing body. The school tracks pupils' progress very carefully, sets challenging targets and provides outstanding support to ensure they have every chance to meet them. The teachers and skilled teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who make good progress and are fully included in all school activities.

The school has worked hard to provide a good, stimulating curriculum that makes learning interesting. It links subjects together well, so that pupils have many opportunities to enhance their literacy skills in all subjects. Their work on the 'Swinging Sixties', for example, led to some excellent writing about how people lived in those times. The curriculum provides excellent guidance on how to live healthy lives and pupils speak with authority on the best foods to eat to stay fit. They think deeply about how their actions affect others and develop an excellent sense of right and wrong. As a result, behaviour is outstanding and pupils make the most of their time in lessons. The extensive range of clubs at lunchtime and after school are very popular with pupils and do much to extend their learning in areas such as music, sport and ICT. The curriculum provides some opportunities for pupils to learn about the world around them, and there are useful links with a school in Tanzania that help them understand how different life is in that country. However, pupils' knowledge of other cultures and faiths in Great Britain is sketchy. The school recognises the need to improve this aspect of the provision, and has started to explore links with contrasting schools.

Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility for their community and they do this readily. For example, the school council and eco-committee take their duties very seriously, and give pupils real opportunities to improve their school. Pupils enjoy being involved in the church and local community, supporting events and charitable projects with great enthusiasm.

These many strengths mean that the school fully justifies its good reputation in the local area. One parent's view, typical of many, put it in a nutshell: 'The school is so well regarded because it combines a forward-thinking approach and up-to-date curriculum with the traditional values of a village school.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Good provision helps children to reach above average standards in all areas of their learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children grow in confidence and are very mature for their ages. Their progress is recorded carefully and supplemented by useful photographic evidence. The children add to this by taking their own pictures, and use cameras with great aplomb. Their early literacy and numeracy skills come on well, and the more able children gain much from working together with Year 1 pupils. The comprehensive induction procedures, excellent links with parents and thorough attention to children's welfare mean that they settle quickly to school routines and feel safe. The consistently good teaching, with a strong emphasis on developing children's language, writing, numeracy and social skills, ensures that children make good progress. The classroom is bright and stimulating and children choose confidently from the wide range of activities provided. There is an excellent focus on developing children's awareness of how to look after their bodies, and they enjoy making healthy choices from the 'café'. They enjoy working and playing outside, and love the stimulating Forest School area. However, the staff do not always take full advantage of the outside area to develop children's independence, enabling them to discover things for themselves and helping them learn to take calculated risks.

Children develop their personal and social skills very well, as can be seen by the way they work and play so happily together. Their behaviour is excellent, and they soon learn the rules and expectations that prepare them so well for the future. The provision is led and managed well. Staff have a clear understanding of how well the provision meets children's needs and what needs to be improved.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, cultures and backgrounds in the local area and further afield.
- Ensure that children in Reception have sufficient opportunities to work and play outside.

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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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

## 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	2
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	2
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James' Church of England Primary School, Malvern, WR14 4BB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside in your beautiful grounds. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how proud you are of your school. You are right to be, because it is a good school!

What we found out about your school

- You work hard and make good progress. The standard of your work is better than is found in most other schools.
- Your behaviour is outstanding, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on very well with each other and help those who are lonely or upset.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe, eat the right things and live healthy lives.
- You care a lot about people in the world who are not as fortunate as you.
- Your school's leaders are good at running the school and know how to improve things.
- You enjoy the interesting activities planned for you, and the many clubs at lunchtime and after school that teach you important skills in things like music and sport.
- You like your teachers, and they do a good job. They work very hard to plan interesting work and, as one of you said, 'know all of us really well'.
- All staff at the school take excellent care of you and keep you safe.

What we would like the school to do now

- Give you more opportunities to learn about other faiths, cultures and backgrounds in the local area and across the world.
- Make sure that children in the Reception class have enough opportunities to work and play outside.

Good luck for the future!

Yours faithfully

Terry Elston

Lead inspector