

# St James' Church of England Aided Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112915
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	338049
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

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

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<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	121
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Frank Ault
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Bell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Leonard Street Derby DE23 8EG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, one of whom visited the school for half a day specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. Inspectors visited 10 lessons during which four teachers were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and the chair of governors and informal discussions were held with a few parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its monitoring and assessment records, safeguarding documents and those relating to health, safety and strategic planning. In addition, 59 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered, together with those returned by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether the performance of current pupils matches the improvement seen in the national assessments in 2009
- the extent to which the teaching of writing has improved and how well staff use their assessments to plan pupils' next steps
- how effectively the school uses its links with the federation to improve pupils' learning and well-being.

## Information about the school

Most of the pupils at this small infant school are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being those of Pakistani heritage. The proportion learning English as an additional language is well above average. Amongst the 17 home languages represented, the most prevalent are Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below the national average and no pupil is in receipt of a statement of special educational needs. An above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school in a unit for Nursery and Reception children. The school has been federated with a local junior school since September 2008 and was joined by another local infant school in January 2010. The headteacher has been in post since January 2009 and is headteacher of the federation.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school because pupils make good progress in their all-round development. The school takes good care of pupils, who enjoy the broad and interesting range of activities provided for them, feel safe in school and behave well. Consequently, pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is average. Parents are very pleased with what the school offers, one commending staff for their 'wonderful work'.

When children first start school, their attainment covers a broad range but, taken overall, it is well below that expected. A few children have significant special educational needs and, in addition, some are new to learning English. One of the school's strengths is the success it has in meeting pupils' diverse needs. Staff take full advantage of the school's small size and know each pupil well. They use this knowledge skilfully to match the work to pupils' particular needs and to target extra support where it is most needed. As a result, pupils make good progress, whatever their ability, need or familiarity with English. Teachers' planning is clear about what pupils are expected to learn. Their progress is reviewed at the end of the lesson, but there are occasional missed opportunities to encourage pupils to reflect on their learning during the course of the lesson, so that misunderstandings can be tackled there and then. Nevertheless, teachers give pupils clear verbal and written feedback about how well they have done and how they might improve. Most lessons run at a brisk pace although, occasionally, the learning of a few pupils slows when the class is asked to sit and listen for too long, or when their attention wanders as they work in groups.

The headteacher leads the school well and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior colleagues from the other federated schools. Links with these schools are very strong and this contributes, for example, to the school's good provision for pupils learning English as an additional language. There are well organised systems to monitor the work of the school and the information they gather about teaching and learning gives them an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. Plans to improve the school are well thought-out. Good steps are taken to evaluate new initiatives and ensure that they provide good value for money. This, together with leaders' success in maintaining the good provision found in the last inspection, shows that they are well placed to secure further improvement. Good links are established with parents and there are very good systems to encourage them to be involved in the life of the school and contribute to their children's learning. The school works closely with parents to tackle absence. Although the rate of attendance is generally average, leaders recognise that there is still more to do ensure that attendance levels reflect pupils' high levels of enjoyment of school.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils learning by:
  - ensuring that all lessons run at a brisk pace
  - providing pupils with regular opportunities to review their learning during the course of the lesson.
- Work with parents to raise levels of attendance.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>2</b>
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Results in the national assessments for Year 2 pupils fell in 2008 and were below average. Successful work to raise pupils' attainment, particularly in writing, resulted in good improvement in 2009. The school's assessment of current pupils, together with their work in books and lessons, reveals that Year 2 pupils, although operating at slightly lower levels than the previous year group, are well on track to reach average standards. From their starting points, this represents good progress for all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils learn successfully because teaching and support staff combine well to meet pupils' differing needs. Most pupils work hard, listen attentively and are keen to learn. They learn best when they are actively involved in practical tasks. In a successful mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils showed a mature understanding of how to tackle word problems and collaborated well with others to select the right strategies. Similarly, Year 1 pupils made good gains in their understanding of how to find 10 less than a number, because they were given good opportunities to predict and explain their answers. Pupils' good progress in their basic skills ensures they are well prepared for the future.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development is underpinned by a strong Christian ethos that welcomes, respects and celebrates pupils' diverse backgrounds. They respond well to the school's strong moral code and clear guidelines for behaviour. Consequently, relationships amongst pupils of all backgrounds are very positive. Pupils' behaviour is good, and is often exemplary. Those who find it difficult to behave are usually well managed, although a few become restless when the pace of the lesson slows. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on important issues in assemblies, raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves and enjoy finding out about the natural world in lessons. They take on extra responsibilities willingly. For example, the school council are rightly proud of their contribution to improving toilet facilities and to the impending improvement of playtime equipment. Breaks and lunchtimes are calm yet energetic occasions and pupils show a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and use this information well to provide interesting and challenging lessons. More able pupils usually receive the harder work of which they are capable. Lessons are tightly organised and, because most pupils behave well, they run smoothly. Pupils learning English as an additional language are supported sensitively, so that they soon gain in confidence and make similar progress to their classmates. Teachers ensure there is a strong focus on the intended learning at the beginnings and ends of lessons. Opportunities are occasionally missed to draw the class together at regular points during the lesson to reflect on and review their understanding. Improvements to the teaching of writing have contributed to raising standards, and more pupils than was previously the case are on track to reach the higher Level 3.

The school's broad and interesting curriculum contributes to pupils' enjoyment and good progress. There is a strong emphasis on speaking, listening, reading and writing and pupils' personal development is promoted successfully. The school has worked effectively to improve links between subjects to increase the opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills and make the learning even more relevant. This is bearing fruit, and remains a priority. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed making good use of computers to research minibeasts. A good range of popular clubs, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning and add to their enjoyment. These are enhanced by productive links with the federation that, for example, improve provision for gifted and able pupils. The school takes good care of pupils and ensures that individual needs are met. This was endorsed by all of those parents returning the inspection questionnaire. A close

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check is kept on pupils' welfare and there are good procedures for securing their health and safety. Systems to protect potentially vulnerable pupils are very robust. The nurture group is popular amongst pupils and adds to their enjoyment of school. Processes to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well organised and this contributes to their good progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a strong sense of teamwork and a shared commitment to securing improvement. Leaders are taking full advantage of the school's links with its partners in the federation to enhance its provision. For example, expertise that might not otherwise be readily available is brought in, and this is reciprocated by the school providing its own specialist knowledge for the other schools to use. Governors have made great strides since the governing body was reorganised in January. A good range of strategies have been introduced to monitor the school's work and plan for improvement, although some initiatives are too new to have taken full effect. Systems to safeguard pupils are thorough; robust steps are taken to check on the suitability of adults to work with children and accurate records are maintained.

Leaders place a very strong and successful emphasis on meeting pupils' needs, eliminating potential discrimination and ensuring that all are included, whatever their background, ability or gender. This is underpinned by good links with a wide range of specialist agencies. Work to close the gap between the performance of boys and girls has successfully improved boys' writing and girls' mathematics. The school works closely with most parents, many of whom volunteer their help for lessons or out-of-school activities. The school promotes community cohesion well and pupils of all backgrounds get on very harmoniously in its inclusive and supportive atmosphere. Leaders have a good understanding of the diverse nature of school and local community. Work further afield is at an earlier stage, but plans are well in hand to extend these links. For example, an exploratory visit to a school in India is imminent.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit because they are taught well. Staff work closely together to plan an interesting range of activities that build upon children's interests. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those selected by children, and they have regular access to the outdoor area and the school hall. Nursery and Reception children enjoy their activities very much and relationships are very positive. They play well together, indoors and out, and are very supportive of each other, particularly those children who are new to learning English. Children make good progress in this supportive atmosphere, and this is enhanced by good links with parents that ensure children settle quickly. They achieve well, although attainment is a little lower than that expected. Children enjoy finding out if animals are awake during the day or night, explore sand, water and plasticene enthusiastically and computers are particularly popular. Staff lead the activities well, pose challenging questions and encourage children to extend their ideas and vocabulary. Occasionally, some children become restless when they are required to sit and listen for too long. Staff keep a close check on children's learning and their detailed assessments build up to form helpful and attractive 'My Early Years' learning journals. The setting is well led and managed and aspects of the provision are reviewed regularly. For example, staff have rightly recognised the need to improve outdoor provision by creating more shelter, and plans are well in hand. Children's welfare needs are well met.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2



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## **Views of parents and carers**

A higher than usual proportion of parents returned the questionnaire. Their views are very positive and few disagree with the statements included in the consultation. All those who expressed a view indicate that the teaching is good and the school keeps their children safe, meets their particular needs and is well led and managed. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St James' Church of England Aided Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 121 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	53	24	41	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	64	20	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	49	25	42	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	37	33	56	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	49	29	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	46	27	46	2	3	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	41	33	56	0	0	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	34	36	61	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	36	38	64	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	42	29	49	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	36	32	54	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	37	32	54	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	47	30	51	0	0	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James' Church of England Aided Infant School, Derby, DE23 8EG

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those who met with us to give us your views. You were very helpful. I am writing to tell you what we found out. Lots of you and your parents told us how much you enjoy school. We agree. You go to a good school and it does many things well.

You make good progress in your work because you try hard, behave well and your teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable.

Your headteacher staff and governors take good care of you and make sure you are safe and able to learn.

You know how to stay safe and healthy, and you get on well with all the other pupils and adults in school.

Your teachers keep a close check on how well you are learning. They make sure the work is hard enough and give you plenty of help when you need it.

Even though your school is good, your headteacher and the other adults want it to be even better. We have asked them to do two things.

We want them to always make sure that you do not spend too long sitting on the carpet, and to keep checking that you are working hard and understanding your work during lessons.

We want them to work with your parents to make sure that all of you come to school as often as you can.

We know you will want to help. Please keep working hard and behaving well. Please concentrate all the time and remember, the more you come to school, the more you learn.

Best wishes

Keith Williams

Lead inspector

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