

St James' Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113840
Local Authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	338251
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Fiona Brown
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Lyonette
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2007
School address	Pokesdown Hill Christchurch Road Bournemouth BH7 6DW
Telephone number	01202 426696
Fax number	01202 433073
Email address	susan.lyonette@bournemouth.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2010
Inspection number	338251

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent looking at learning, with 19 lessons observed and 15 teachers seen. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors and groups of pupils. The lead inspector also conducted a telephone discussion with a senior officer from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, including samples of pupils' work in writing and mathematics. They looked at a range of documentation, including evidence of the school's and the local authority's monitoring, data and tracking spreadsheets showing pupils' progress, relevant policy documents, and the school's plans for further improvement. Questionnaires completed by 90 parents and carers were analysed together with those from staff, and from approximately 100 pupils, chosen at random.

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

- how well the school helps to develop pupils as individuals and promote their personal and social development
- the effectiveness of pupils' learning and progress between Years 3 and 6
- the extent to which teaching promotes learning across the ability range, based on astute assessment and knowledge of pupils' prior learning and standards
- how successfully leaders at all levels monitor and evaluate the school's work and take steps that lead to improvement.

Information about the school

St James' serves families who live on the eastern fringe of Bournemouth. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportions who speak English as an additional language and/or come from minority ethnic groups are much lower than average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school holds several awards; amongst these are awards associated with the arts and promoting healthy lifestyles. At the time of the inspection, one assistant headteacher was on long-term leave. A building programme, to improve the access arrangements and facilities at the main entrance, is due to start within the next few weeks.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St James' is a satisfactory school. Children get off to a good start to their school life in the Reception classes, where good provision helps them to learn and develop successfully. This good start continues in Key Stage 1 and, by the time they reach Year 2, standards are high. From then on, their progress in Key Stage 2, while clearly improving, has been variable over recent years. The broadly average standards by Year 6 have not been as high as the school would have wanted, though they did rise in 2009. Improvements to the curriculum and the steps taken to raise standards in mathematics indicate the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. There is, nevertheless, some variability in pupils' learning and progress, mainly in writing and mathematics, and this means overall achievement is satisfactory rather than good. This must not, however, mask the distinctive and important strengths in this school. Some good and occasionally outstanding teaching was observed in both key stages during the inspection and none was inadequate. In these former cases, activities were lively, relevant and challenging, and there was often plenty of variety to the lesson. Whatever the effectiveness of the teaching, pupils are good learners and most display all the attributes teachers would want in terms of their motivation, behaviour and willingness to work hard.

Central to pupils' enjoyment of school is the hard work that goes into making the school an inviting, lively and caring environment in which to work and learn. Many parents and carers, and pupils, confirm this and staff questionnaires are similarly positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school, like and respect the adults who work with them and particularly appreciate the friendly, family 'feel' of the school. They are aware and respectful of the school's strong links with the church and the Christian faith, and they appreciate the ethos and sense of unity and fellowship that this brings. The documentation submitted to the inspection team contained one sentence which leapt out of the page, 'We place considerable emphasis'on the unique individuality of each child.' This underpins much of the school's work and is manifested in, for example, the good quality of care and support for pupils. This helps them to develop their individual, personal qualities and equips them with the wider personal and social skills needed for their next steps in education and beyond. What is not yet quite as strong is the extent to which this quotation is reflected in pupils' academic progress. There are several main reasons for this.

- Some teaching is not as effective as it could be and, as a result, pupils learn at a slower pace.
- The school's self-evaluation is sometimes over-generous and not always based on sufficient breadth of evidence. The headteacher relies too heavily on informal monitoring rather than evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning

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

to help support and improve teaching further.

- From this year, pupils' progress is being checked each term, but developments are too recent to have had an impact on the relatively small proportion of pupils who continue to make slow progress in Key Stage 2.
- The school's spreadsheets for tracking pupils' attainment and progress have been improved this academic year but are not yet used to full effect by teachers and leaders to pick up any underachievement at an early stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of pupils' progress in writing and mathematics, initially by focusing on those pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have the most ground to make up, by:
 - ensuring leaders make good use of the school's tracking sheets to monitor pupils' progress more regularly
 - picking up quickly on any pupils who are in danger of underachieving and intervening effectively to help them make better progress
 - ensuring teachers have a clearer understanding of the main messages arising from assessments so that they can amend their plans and set up interventions when necessary.
- Ensure the headteacher strengthens systems and strategies for monitoring and improving teaching further, maintaining a clear focus on the quality of learning of individual pupils and groups.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils benefit from consistently good teaching in all years, by:
 - disseminating the good practice that already exists in the school to enable teachers to benefit from each other's ideas and approaches
 - ensuring the teachers receive helpful and diagnostic feedback after all observations so that they know how learning can be further improved
 - using information from marking and assessments more effectively to fill any gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge and help them achieve the next steps in reaching higher standards
 - improving the consistency and effectiveness of marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils behave very well in lessons and when moving around the school or gathering together, for example for worship. Their singing during worship is spirited and has good choral qualities. In lessons, pupils join in enthusiastically, especially when motivated by tasks, and they work cooperatively with partners or in teams very successfully. Even when lessons are less interesting and the pace of their learning is too slow, pupils try hard and do their best. They feel safe in school, act responsibly and show good

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

commitment to caring about the environment and other people, especially those who are encountering difficult circumstances and are less fortunate than themselves.

Leaders responded satisfactorily to the dip in standards in 2008 and results picked up in 2009. Nevertheless, the school missed its targets in 2009 by some margin because some pupils did not make the expected two levels progress between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Since September, the school has increased the frequency with which it checks pupils' progress and has focused more closely on the levels that pupils are achieving. These are positive developments and are leading to better learning and progress and satisfactory achievement overall for all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are, however, some pupils, mainly in Year 5 and 6 from across the attainment range, whose progress in writing and mathematics has not been consistent enough since leaving Year 2.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The school has concentrated on some important aspects of teaching and the quality is improving. There is a core of good teaching in the school where successful features

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

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

often include some or all of the following:

- good relationships and high expectations of behaviour and concentration
- a strong contribution from teaching assistants in supporting individual pupils or promoting the learning of groups
- effective use of information and communication technology to boost learning and capture pupils' interest
- well-organised lessons with plenty of variety, skilful changes of activity, effective use of questioning, and good conclusions to lessons when learning is consolidated and extended.

In contrast, some lessons do not draw upon these qualities and learning is not as effective. Teachers' plans are not always sufficiently based upon detailed knowledge of the gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills as shown by their ongoing assessments. The quality of marking remains inconsistent, though very effective practice does exist when pupils are given detailed feedback and helpful hints on how to improve.

The headteacher and staff have also worked hard to bring about improvements to the curriculum. This has helped to improve pupils' progress as well as enjoyment. The additional focus on mental mathematics is a good example, where more attention to developing the specific aspects that were found to be relatively weaker led to better results in 2009. The school works closely with other agencies to provide support for pupils who may be encountering situations that make them more vulnerable. It also provides good care and support for all pupils, through the school's own provision and resources.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have established a culture where staff work strongly as a team, supporting one another and creating a positive learning atmosphere for everyone. The senior leaders and governors have been aware that outcomes have been weaker in Key Stage 2 over recent years. Steps have been taken to improve teaching, for example through training and through working to teachers' individual strengths. These have had some impact and have begun to bring about greater consistency in pupils' learning and progress. However, the National Curriculum levels set as targets for individual pupils are mostly pitched towards their making satisfactory rather than good progress. Pupils' good work attitudes and ability to

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

persevere are valuable attributes that are not harnessed sufficiently well to enable more to make good progress. As a result, the ambition and drive set by senior leaders and the extent to which the school promotes opportunities for all pupils to achieve equally well are satisfactory rather than good. The school has carried out an audit and drawn up plans to fulfil its duty to promote community cohesion. This has rightly highlighted the need to develop pupils' contact with, and knowledge of, people who live in different contexts to their own, both in this country and beyond. Governors ensure arrangements for safeguarding pupils are met. They are supportive and have appropriate strategies for finding out about the school's work. However, they do not always have sufficient information on pupils' outcomes, particularly their achievement, to help them contribute to the school's self-evaluation and provide a degree of challenge for the school's leaders.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills generally above those normally found at this age. Almost all children have some pre-school experience and they join the school with good levels of personal and social development. They make good progress while in Reception as a result of the strong provision and careful attention to their learning and development. They make particularly good headway in their personal, social and emotional development and in acquiring early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of learning activities and these are skilfully planned by adults, who work together very well as a team. They plan

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

effectively across all areas to promote children's learning and development. As a result, children leave Reception as active, keen, inquisitive learners who demonstrate good levels of independence. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led by the relatively new leader and a good start has been made in developing the provision further. Ongoing assessments are used well in both Reception classes to recognise the small steps in children's achievements as well as to plan the next steps in their learning. There are good links with feeder nurseries and other providers and the transition to Year 1 is well managed and smooth so that children move from one environment to the next without a stark change of culture and any disruption to their learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires show most parents and carers are happy with the school's work and their child's education and experiences at St James'. Many parents and carers added comments in praise of the school's culture and ethos. Where there were negative comments, these mostly centred on parents and carers wanting more detailed and regular information on their child's progress and some had issues with inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' positive views and agree that there is some justification for those views related to pupils' progress and the consistency of teaching. The school does not yet make full use of its assessment information to promote good learning and progress for all pupils in Key Stage 2.

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 Primary 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	70	26	29	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	70	78	19	21	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	36	47	52	9	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	52	34	38	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	61	68	26	29	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	57	34	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	56	38	42	0	0	0	0
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)	37	41	46	51	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	49	40	44	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	38	43	48	8	9	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	37	46	51	8	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	53	36	40	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	63	31	34	0	0	1	1

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



11 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James' Church of England Primary School, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6DW

We very much enjoyed visiting your school recently during its inspection and were pleased to talk to so many of you. A special 'thank you' goes to any children who spoke to us, whether this was in lessons or during other activities, to the children who met with an inspector and to those who filled in a questionnaire. You all helped us in our work and gave us a 'feel' for what it is like to be a pupil at St James'.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. There are many things that are good and we know that many of you really enjoy coming to school. We were very impressed by how hard you work in lessons, your behaviour and how well you get along with one another. The children in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 do particularly well and many of you in the rest of the school also make good progress. We found that some of the older children do not always make enough progress in their writing and mathematics, although the school has started to tackle this and things are improving. We have asked the school to keep a careful eye on how well each of you is doing in these two areas so that you do not fall behind in your work. We know that many of your lessons are interesting and lively and that you learn well when this is the case. However, there are also some lessons that are not quite as good and we have asked the headteacher and teachers to work on several things to bring up the standard of these lessons to those of the best.

Your school is a caring place in which to learn. It has a warm, welcoming atmosphere. The questionnaires that many of your parents and carers completed show that most of them are very pleased with the school's work. They singled out many things that they appreciated. We also learnt from your questionnaires all the things that you like. I know that you will be keen that the staff work successfully to improve the school so that it becomes even better. All the inspectors were very impressed by your positive attitudes to school life. I know you will all do your best to help the school improve, share with your teachers the things that are helpful for you in your learning and say 'well done!' when you spot something that has definitely improved.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.