

St James' CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102764
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	335967
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	June Woolhouse

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ellen Kemp
Headteacher	Nina Panayis
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen lessons were observed and all 12 teachers were seen at least once. Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, the school development plan, pupils' work, displays and photographs. Parents and carers returned 50 questionnaires and inspectors analysed these and questionnaires from staff and pupils.

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

- how well teaching meets the needs of different groups, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those whose first language is not English and the more able, in English, mathematics and science
- the impact of senior and middle leaders' strategies to ensure all pupils make sufficient progress in their learning
- the effectiveness of school systems for tracking and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- the quality and range of the different learning experiences provided.

Information about the school

St James' is a larger than average junior school. It is in a soft federation with a neighbouring junior school. The majority of pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school at the beginning of Year 3. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportions of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds and/or those who speak English as an additional language are above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Their needs include speech and language disorders, and moderate learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties. The school has awards for promoting pupils' healthy living.

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' Church of England Junior School provides its pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. It has improved further since the last inspection and has consolidated some important elements of its provision. These improvements are the result of the headteacher's very skilled and determined leadership. Attainment has improved steadily and is now average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The headteacher has maintained the focus on raising attainment but has also improved links with parents and carers, and working in partnership with other key players. Consequently, care, guidance and support are good and this is reflected in pupils' good behaviour, cooperative attitudes and much improved attendance. Safeguarding procedures are good and all pupils, including those more vulnerable, feel safe and cared for. In addition, with sterling support from the senior leadership team, she has forged an effective and enthusiastic staff team who are very committed to pupils' well-being and progress.

Senior leaders are increasingly involved in accurately evaluating teaching and pupils' progress. The school's self-evaluation procedures are well organised and accurate information about pupils' progress is produced regularly using the tracking system. Subject leaders are beginning to increase their understanding of the expected levels of attainment using national assessment guidance but have not yet fully translated this information into precise planning and more effective teaching. Teaching has improved but remains inconsistent across the school and affects rates of progress, particularly of the more able, because it does not address their needs sufficiently well. Teachers' variable subject knowledge in mathematics and science mean pupils do not understand some key information in these lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English achieve as well as their peers. Governors are increasing their influence, although not all of them are fully informed about how to challenge the school on its performance. Given these developments, the school has a satisfactory and increasing capacity to improve.

The curriculum is improving because teachers are beginning to link subjects together into topics, for example The Greeks. Opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills are increasing and result in pupils becoming more confident and proficient in English, mathematics and science. Information and communication technology skills (ICT), are developing well because the school is so well resourced, giving pupils scope for independent research and problem solving. At present teachers' planning is not consistently geared to using this resource to consolidate learning or stretch the more able. Music teaching and sport by other providers, and popular educational visits, contribute well to pupils' personal development and increase their knowledge of other subjects. Pupils are treated equally and are respectful of those from different

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backgrounds and cultures. Equality of opportunity is part of the school's core values and is reflected in the increasing number of pupils who achieve as well as they can. Bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly. This well-established ethos contributes well to a very cohesive community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
 - improving the quality of planning so that the needs of all groups are accurately addressed
 - increasing teachers' subject knowledge especially in mathematics and science.
- Improve the involvement and skills of middle leaders and managers by:
 - including them in regular monitoring of teaching
 - developing understanding of expected rates of progress using national targets and expectations.
- Increase the progress made by the more able by:
 - planning specific tasks and projects that enable sustained and independent enquiry.

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

Pupils' attainment has risen over the past three years and is broadly average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This steady improvement is the result of more effective teaching, better attitudes to learning and improved tracking of pupils' progress. Pupils enjoy learning together and cooperate well, for example when they were deciding how to present a balanced argument based on the proposition 'should laptops be taken home?' Pupils listened to each other closely, recorded their ideas accurately and then rehearsed them carefully in preparation for a class presentation. They made good use of well-prepared resources to organise their thinking and become more confident speakers. Sometimes pupils' progress was insufficient because tasks were not matched well enough to their needs. In a science lesson, pupils did not have enough practical resources on which to base their discussion on germination or detailed support to build on previous learning. Behaviour deteriorated and pupils disengaged from learning so progress was slow. Other observations around the school show that pupils are keen to accept responsibility and contribute their ideas through the school council. They reflect their understanding of the multi-cultural school community through good social skills which resulted, for example in an impromptu singing and dance performance in the lunchtime break. Pupils have a good understanding of how to be healthy, demonstrated through appropriate eating habits, drinking water regularly and enjoying sport, for example during playtime games and exercise. Enterprise skills are at a satisfactory level but improving as pupils demonstrate confident ICT skills when using laptops or as they apply their literacy and numeracy skills more regularly. The rapid improvement in

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attendance, which is now above average, is testament to their increasing enjoyment of learning.

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?

Teaching is satisfactory and there are a number of strong features emerging with increasing frequency across the school. Lessons are planned to a common format ensuring that pupils know what they are going to learn in each lesson. When planning addresses the needs of all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those whose first language is not English and the more able, then progress is good. In these lessons teachers quickly involve pupils in discussions and group work enabling them to build up their literacy and problem-solving skills. Good behaviour management and relationships with pupils are significant factors in effective learning. At present this does not happen consistently and more able pupils do more of the same work rather than tackle challenging problem-solving activities or sustained independent work. In addition, some teachers have insufficient subject knowledge resulting in lessons that lack precise steps in learning. Pupils do not understand important principles,

¹ 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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particularly in mathematics and science, so do not make enough progress. Teachers' expertise in assessing pupils' work is improving with the use of nationally designed exemplars. Planned activities that follow are usually, but not always, matched to pupils' needs. Improved marking guides pupils in how they can improve their work but is not consistently applied in all classes. Teaching assistants ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English take a full part in lessons and achieve as well as their classmates.

The curriculum, although correctly focused on improving core skills of literacy and numeracy, is increasingly addressing the other subjects in a more balanced way. Plans to link subjects are at an early stage but topics relevant to pupils and the school's location, for example the Olympic Games, are beginning to tackle the wider range of pupils' needs, including the more able. Well-chosen visits provide pupils with more relevant and interesting first-hand experiences. Improvements in the curriculum are reflected in a number of awards the school has received.

Staff know pupils well and are committed to their personal development and well-being. Sensitive care and guidance, both in classrooms and when pupils break for play or lunchtimes, contribute considerably to the harmonious atmosphere and well-organised routines. Effective partnerships with a range of other agencies and institutions, as well as parents and carers, also make good contributions to pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

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?

Leadership and management are increasingly effective because there is an ambitious set of priorities which are fully understood and shared among staff. Everyone understands the need to continue to raise attainment and rates of progress through improved teaching and better learning for all pupils. Priorities are well documented in the school development plan and monitored by the senior leaders. Outcomes are used to plan further improvements and identify staff development needs. The headteacher has high expectations of pupils and staff. The important ethos for learning based on inclusive attitudes, consistently applied behaviour management strategies and genuine concern for pupils' well-being has been consolidated. Staff are fully trained in child protection matters and the most vulnerable benefit from their expertise. Pupils want to come to school and when they are involved in purposeful learning they enjoy what they are

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doing and thrive. Curriculum planning is starting to address a greater range of subjects following the necessary focus on literacy and numeracy, but plans to tackle the wide range of needs are not yet detailed enough to accelerate progress further, especially for the more able. Governors are well informed of what is happening in school and are effective in ensuring that pupils are safe and that resources are deployed effectively. They are increasing their understanding of how to evaluate pupils' progress against national standards. Good attention to eradicating any form of discrimination shows in the harmonious way pupils get along with each other and adults. The school promotes community cohesion effectively by ensuring that the wide range of religious and cultural characteristics represented in the school and local community are valued equally. Good links to local and international schools are increasing understanding of national and global issues to the benefit of all involved. The school is bright and well maintained with attractive outdoor areas for social interaction or more vigorous sporting activities

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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents and carers returned their questionnaires but of these the vast majority are very satisfied with their children's school experiences and progress. A very few were not convinced that unsatisfactory behaviour was dealt with effectively or their concerns were listened to. This was not borne out by what inspectors observed in school or what the pupils told them.

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 Junior 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 305 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	44	25	50	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	58	21	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	42	25	50	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	32	30	60	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	25	50	24	48	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	32	31	62	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	34	32	64	1	2	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)	24	48	21	42	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	26	29	58	4	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	46	20	40	6	12	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	22	30	60	8	16	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	42	22	44	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	54	22	44	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). 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"> ■ 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.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St James' Church of England Junior School, London E7 9DA

I am writing to tell you how much my team and I enjoyed working in your school last week and finding out about all the interesting things you are learning. Thank you for talking to us and helping us to complete the inspection. We were impressed with the way you behaved and were respectful of each other most of the time in class and when you were outside. Good behaviour enables everyone to get on with the important task of learning and we thought that you were making satisfactory progress overall. In some lessons your progress was even better because of good teaching. We have asked your headteacher to improve teaching so that all of you can eventually make good progress and be ready to do harder work at the secondary school. In order to make sure all the teachers teach consistently well we have asked the school's leaders to keep a closer check on what is planned for you and asked the headteacher to make sure that it happens too. Finally, there are some of you who find the work a bit too easy and really need to have a few more challenges. We have asked that these pupils get some really hard problems to solve at the same time as the rest of the class are doing their work. I hope you will continue to work hard and cooperate with each other in lessons so that all your teachers will see that you make the best progress you can.

I do hope you have an interesting time as the term comes to a close. I know that some of you will have been to the National Gallery for your Greek project by then. Perhaps you will have a chance to return during the summer holidays to refresh your memories. Some of you will be leaving school this year and wondering what it will be like in the big school. I know you will have a great time because you have learned how to treat each other with respect and courtesy. This will be an important skill in your next school.

So, I wish everyone well for the future.

Yours sincerely

June Woolhouse

Lead Inspector

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