

Inspection of St James CofE Primary School

Frederick Crescent, Enfield EN3 7HH

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their school days. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well. They are friendly to one another. If bullying does occur, staff act quickly to ensure it stops. Pupils know that there are caring adults they can turn to if they have any worries. They are safe and happy at school.

Despite these positive features, pupils do not achieve well across all subjects. Leaders' ambitions are not realised for every pupil. Some pupils do not learn to read fluently. They do not routinely get the support they need to address gaps in their learning. Planning for some areas of the curriculum does not identify clearly the order in which pupils need to build knowledge. Learning does not typically build on pupils' prior knowledge. Teaching does not ensure that pupils build up secure knowledge and understanding.

The school is a welcoming environment. Pupils and staff enjoy positive and respectful relationships. They are encouraged to recognise the importance of equality and fairness. Parents and carers valued the kindness of staff and all they do for their children.

Pupils appreciate the range of clubs on offer. Trips outside school provide pupils with new experiences.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, the school has suffered from inconsistent leadership. Recently appointed senior leaders are making a positive difference. They have improved staff morale. Staff have a determination to make the school better. Many subject leaders and teachers are new to their roles. Leaders have begun to make changes to the curriculum so that subject content is sequenced coherently. Teachers are in the process of developing their subject expertise to ensure all plans are fully embedded.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, pupils learn well. In these subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is clear about what pupils need to know. Teachers identify gaps and misconceptions which pupils have and adapt their teaching to address these. However, this is not the case across all subjects. Leaders do not ensure that teachers routinely use pupils' assessment information to identify precisely what pupils know.

In some other subjects, the curriculum is not as well planned or taught. Leaders have not given enough thought to what they want pupils to learn or when. Teaching in these subjects does not ensure all pupils build on their knowledge and understanding over time. In the early years, teaching does not break down children's learning into smaller steps. Staff do not routinely ensure that all pupils

have mastered knowledge before they move on to new content. As a result, pupils do not develop secure knowledge or appropriate vocabulary in these areas or subjects.

The teaching of early reading has not been a priority. Leaders have not ensured that the teaching of phonics is consistent. As a result, many pupils in Years 1 and 2 cannot read as well as they should. Leaders do not ensure that pupils who find reading difficult get regular practice. This limits the progress these pupils make towards becoming fluent readers. Teaching in Reception does not routinely check that children have learned and practised new sounds so they can identify and address any gaps.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are generally given appropriate support. Leaders identify the most important barriers to learning for these pupils. However, training for staff is in its infancy. As a result, the support that pupils with SEND receive is not typically effective in meeting all their needs. Pupils with SEND who need further support for their social, emotional or mental health receive positive support.

Teachers emphasise the importance of equality. They teach pupils about discrimination in society. This helps pupils to understand the negative impact of derogatory language. Teachers ensure that pupils concentrate on their work and do not disrupt learning.

The school teaches pupils how to be safe and healthy. Teachers promote physical activity and ensure that all pupils know how to eat healthily. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities. Many pupils appreciate the range of sports they can take part in at school. Pupils are actively involved in the life of the school. They take on a range of leadership roles such as supporting younger members of the school community. Pupils get lots of opportunities to experience democracy in action, such as through school elections and meetings with political representatives.

Leaders and the governing body have not ensured that all pupils experience the high quality of education which they aspire to. Members of the governing body, have insufficient knowledge of the curriculum to provide effective support and challenge to improve the school further. Leaders want the best for every child and this vision is beginning to be realised in many aspects of the school's work. For example, raising the expectations for pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and the governing body have successfully created a strong safeguarding culture and ethos. Leaders ensure that procedures and routines are firmly embedded to support the needs of pupils and their families. Staff are well trained

and know what to do if they have a concern. Leaders are diligent in utilising outside agencies when necessary to support vulnerable pupils.

Teachers helps pupils to understand how to keep safe, including online. This prepares them well for the next stages of learning.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not defined clearly the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in a way which is coherent and well sequenced. As a result, teachers are not clear about what pupils need to learn and in what order. Leaders must provide teachers with guidance and support so they teach the curriculum equally well in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that new subject leaders have the knowledge and time to check the quality of curriculum thinking, delivery and its impact on how well pupils achieve.
- In some subjects, assessment is not precise enough. It does not identify specific gaps and misconceptions which pupils, including those with SEND, have. As a result, teachers do not adapt their teaching or support individual pupils to catch up in the most timely and effective ways. Leaders should ensure that assessment in all subjects gives teachers clear and precise information about the gaps and misconceptions which individual pupils have, so that these can be quickly addressed.
- Teaching, including in the early years, does not break down children's learning into smaller steps. Staff do not routinely ensure that all pupils have mastered knowledge before they move on to new content. Leaders should ensure that teaching secures pupils' understanding, including of appropriate vocabulary, including in the early years.
- The planned support for children and pupils who are not yet fluent readers is not targeted enough on the most important needs or barriers for these pupils. This means that these pupils do not catch up in their reading as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure that pupils who struggle with reading are accurately assessed and that support is precisely targeted to support them.
- The governing body lacks detailed knowledge of the curriculum and the quality of education. This limits its ability to effectively support and challenge leaders at the school. The governing body should develop its understanding of the curriculum and quality of education in order to support the school to improve rapidly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	102033
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10242090
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Thompson
Headteacher	Lisa Everard
Website	www.stjamesenfield.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the last inspection. The previous headteacher left in September 2022. The school is now jointly led by an executive headteacher, seconded from a neighbouring school, and a head of school, who was previously the deputy headteacher.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school and other members of the school leadership team, including the special educational needs coordinator.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and considered pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including at lunch and breaktime.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governors, members of the governing body and representatives of the diocese and local authority.
- Inspectors met with staff and considered the responses received to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. Inspectors considered the views of parents, including through the responses that were received through Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which included free-text comments.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helena Mills

Ofsted Inspector

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