

Inspection of a good school: St James & St John Church of England Primary School

4 Craven Terrace, London W2 3QD

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Outcome

St James & St John Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are nurtured and cared for in this school. Staff, pupils and their families work closely together to create a family ethos. Leaders are committed to every pupil learning well across all their subjects. Leaders reflect on their practice and are always looking for ways to improve.

Leaders make sure that the school is calm and orderly. Pupils particularly like coming in from the busy surrounding area. Their school is a peaceful space where they can learn without distractions. Leaders make the most of the school's central location. Pupils regularly use Hyde Park, for example, for their learning and social times

Staff have high expectations of pupils, and pupils respond to these. Pupils are focused in lessons and behave well around the school. They are polite, courteous and considerate. Pupils were adamant that bullying does not exist in school. If it did, they said that adults would deal with it promptly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the friendships they make. They are excited about coming to school every day to learn and to be with their friends.

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

Leaders have worked hard to get the teaching of early reading right. They have learned from experts and from other schools to improve how reading is taught. Staff are expert teachers of reading themselves. Children are taught how to read from the moment they start in the early years. Teachers provide pupils with books which match the sounds they already know. Leaders make sure that all pupils learn how to read fluently by the end of Year 2. Those who need more support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive effective intervention to catch up. Teachers know their pupils well and they identify those who need more support very early on.

The curriculum is well planned in most subject areas. Leaders have thought carefully about what teachers should teach and when. Leaders have sequenced learning so that pupils build up knowledge and skills over time. In mathematics, for example, children in the early years start to develop their understanding of numbers. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they have started to solve number problems which involve basic algebra. In a few subjects, leaders have not planned learning in as much detail. Pupils' knowledge is not as well developed as a result. Leaders have started to address this.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. They work alongside teachers to make sure pupils get the right level of support. Pupils, including those with SEND, build up their knowledge well. Across the school, teachers deliver the curriculum exactly how it has been planned. In some subjects, teachers present the learning very clearly. They guide pupils through small and manageable chunks of learning. This was evident in the way pupils were taught written methods of addition and subtraction across the school, for example. Teachers modelled every single step in detail. They considered ahead of time what pupils might find tricky and planned ways to support them.

This is not yet the case in all subjects. At times, teachers are not always clear about the key facts and concepts pupils need to learn and remember. They tend to focus on what the activities are, rather than what they want pupils to learn. Sometimes, pupils receive too much information at once which can overload their memory. As a result, while pupils remember what they did in these lessons, they could not always recall what they actually learned.

In subjects that are well developed, teachers regularly check what pupils have learned and remembered. They use this information to plan what to focus on in lessons. Pupils are involved in assessing what they already know and can do. Some of them said that the 'end of unit check' is one of their favourite lessons as they get to know how well they have learned. In these subjects, pupils learn more of the content of the curriculum than in other subject areas.

Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils' personal development. For example, pupils learned recently about the concept of justice from police officers visiting the school. They have also had a direct experience of democracy as they elected their school council representatives. Teachers enrich the curriculum with educational visits and make full use of the many museum and galleries in London. Pupils appreciate their residential visits, for example to adventure parks. They talked about how they learn more about caring for the environment during these trips.

Pupils behave well. They contribute actively in discussions about their learning. Disruptions in lessons are rare.

Staff appreciate that leaders are approachable. They feel supported to ensure that their workload is manageable. Leaders give staff clear directions and timely support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's 'telling' ethos helps pupils and staff to feel confident in reporting any concerns they may have. Leaders' open-door policy creates a culture of trust and confidence. Adults are vigilant and approach safeguarding with the attitude that 'it could happen here'. Leaders work well with external agencies to support pupils and families who are identified as at risk.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe. For example, there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn about cyberbullying, e-safety and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in all subjects. In a few subjects, pupils do not acquire sufficient cumulative knowledge over time. Staff do not always identify the significant knowledge teachers need to teach, and emphasis and lessons are not sequenced appropriately. However, it is clear that leaders have already taken action to address this. For example, they have begun training staff in how to deliver the newly planned curriculum. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	101132
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10200413
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr Andrew Garwood-Watkins
Headteacher	Mark Hewitt
Website	www.stjamesandstjohnschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher and members of his senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and considered the work of pupils, including those with SEND.

- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspector looked at the single central record, analysed safeguarding records and referrals, observed pupils in and out of lessons, spoke to parents, met with a range of staff, and probed governors' understanding of their safeguarding roles.
- The inspector considered 67 responses to Ofsted's parent survey.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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