

# St James' Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hallfield Lane, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS22 6JS

## Inspection dates

2–3 July 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The determination and drive of the executive headteacher have created a culture that has improved the quality of teaching. Governors challenge leaders and provide effective support.
- Working collaboratively with the other schools in the federation has provided good-quality professional development. This has been highly effective in raising expectations and improving pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers' questioning across the whole school challenges pupils to reason and deepen their thinking.
- Assessment systems are effective in identifying pupils who need additional support to enable them to catch up. Teachers check that activities set for these pupils support strong progress.
- The recent addition of a part-time speech and language therapist in the early years is enabling children to quickly develop communication skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed richly. Pupils are well equipped for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are well behaved and aware of their responsibilities in society. They feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They say bullying is rare.
- Pupils enjoy reading, because teachers use a range of high-quality texts that interest and engage them. Despite this, boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading.
- Not enough pupils in Year 1 achieve the standard in the phonics screening check, so they are unable to use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words.
- Leaders use extra funding to good effect, so that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are better met. However, pupils' outcomes in mathematics remain below those of their peers nationally.
- Teaching in some subjects, such as science in key stage 1 and geography across the school, does not help pupils to acquire knowledge and develop skills well enough.

## Full report

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, by ensuring that:
  - a whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics is embedded securely
  - pupils who are learning to read have books that are correctly matched to their phase in phonics
  - the skills and expertise of all adults who are deployed to teach phonics enable pupils to apply their phonic skills consistently
  - boys develop a love of reading.
- Continue to improve pupils' outcomes in mathematics, especially for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2.
- Senior leaders should ensure that curriculum leadership and expertise continue to develop, and thereby support pupils in deepening their knowledge and skills, especially in science and geography.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher, supported by the local authority, has taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. School leaders across the wider federation are driven by the determination to improve the lives of the children in their care. They plan and implement actions using accurate information about pupils' progress gathered regularly and involving all stakeholders. Pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is improving across the school, although outcomes in mathematics are below those of other pupils nationally.
- Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the executive headteacher's vision for the school and value the training offered by the wider federation. They believe that leaders and governors take the well-being of staff into account and they feel well supported by the school.
- Leaders understand the challenges faced by the school and are addressing them. They have taken appropriate action to improve the provision of phonics, by brokering tailored training for all adults in the teaching of phonics. Equally, leaders are aware that boys who are disadvantaged need to catch up with their non-disadvantaged peers, when compared to other pupils nationally. Evaluating the use of additional funding is enabling leaders to make sure that the needs of these pupils are met. For example, through employing a learning mentor to support pupils by meeting their social and emotional needs, progress is improving.
- Teachers have worked alongside leaders and the local authority school improvement adviser to monitor pupils' progress. As a result of effective checking of pupils' progress, leaders ensure that appropriate extra support is directed to the right place. Thus, pupils' outcomes have improved.
- The executive headteacher has deployed the support of four specialist leaders of education and a mathematics mastery teacher from within the federation to provide effective guidance and professional development for staff. Leaders have developed greater consistency in approaches to the curriculum and assessment across the federation. This has improved the quality of teaching. Leaders have addressed weaknesses in teaching, so that it is now good.
- Subject leadership across the curriculum has not developed fully in some wider subjects, and assessment systems have not yet been established. As a result, pupils' skills in some subject areas are less developed than they are in English and mathematics.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary school physical education and sports premium. Pupils have opportunities to take part in competitive sports events, such as the Brownlee triathlon, football and netball. Staff also benefit from observing the work of specialist coaches and say they feel more confident to teach games. The school has achieved the gold School Sports Award two years running.
- The federation special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) uses funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Alongside the

specialist speech and language therapist, the SENCo assesses pupils' needs carefully, and each pupil has a detailed plan of support and extra provision. Leaders evaluate the additional teaching systematically and review the impact accurately. Pupils with language and communication difficulties are catching up well.

- Leaders have designed a curriculum that enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as practical life skills. Opportunities for pupils to reflect, consider and reason are threaded through all aspects of their learning. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and say they feel safe. The work of staff to promote respect and tolerance can be seen throughout the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors are effective in supporting the executive headteacher in ensuring that priorities are achieved.
- Following a review of governors' practice, the chair of governors was instrumental in ensuring that action was taken to strengthen governance. This has led to governors being confident and competent in analysing and questioning information provided by leaders.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. They monitor the school's work through regular focused visits alongside leaders and the local authority school improvement adviser. This has strengthened their understanding of standards in the school.
- Governors have a clear understanding of safeguarding matters, and two have received training in safer recruitment. They scrutinise reports and meet with the senior designated safeguarding lead across the federation to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school. Leaders ensure that safeguarding updates are a fixed item on the agenda of governing body meetings and keep governors well informed.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Well-managed systems and an effective team approach involving leaders, teachers and office staff ensure that all pupils are kept safe.
- There is a robust system in place to check adults' suitability to work with children and staff qualifications. Regular training is provided by the federation on safeguarding matters for all staff, and staff know how to react if they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- The school knows its pupils very well and detailed records are kept about all safeguarding concerns. Staff are tenacious in accessing appropriate guidance and support from outside agencies for their pupils and families.
- Leaders carry out detailed risk assessments and checks on all aspects of health and safety. Staff are appropriately qualified in first aid. Consequently, pupils are looked after well and are safe in the school.
- Leaders have designed a safeguarding aspect in the school's curriculum to ensure that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils say that they feel safe and talk about how they trust the adults in the school who look after them.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Leaders, including governors, have worked effectively to ensure that weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, identified in the previous inspection, have been fully addressed. This enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching is good across all year groups, including the early years. This is a direct result of teachers' reliable use of new strategies, such as the introduction of a fresh approach for teaching comprehension in the teaching of reading.
- Teachers engage pupils in interesting and current topics, such as climate change. They use good-quality texts to stimulate pupils' discussion and deepen pupils' thinking. This is effective in encouraging boys, in particular, to engage with the learning.
- Teachers are skilled in encouraging pupils to cooperate and share ideas to develop learning. For example, pupils in lower key stage 2 were seen working well in pairs to discuss subtracting mixed fractions.
- Most pupils say that they enjoy reading. They have frequent opportunities to read aloud in school and are encouraged to do so at home. Pupils in key stage 2, in particular, talk confidently about the different authors and books they enjoy. They read across many subjects in the curriculum. Leaders rightly emphasise the importance of deepening pupils' understanding of unfamiliar words. Part of the sequence of teaching for reading and writing is spent successfully exploring new vocabulary.
- The consistent approach to teaching mathematics, developed by the federation mathematics leader, is improving pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics over time. Teachers provide regular opportunities effectively for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics lessons. However, in key stage 2, outcomes in mathematics for disadvantaged pupils are not as strong as those for pupils nationally.
- The school's curriculum is designed to build pupils' knowledge across the curriculum. For example, in pupils' history work, they use poetry to help them understand about life in the trenches. They write at length, showing empathy and understanding. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills progressively in all subject areas. Map work in geography, for example, was similar from year group to year group.
- In the teaching of phonics, some adults do not move learning on quickly enough or intervene firmly enough to support pupils' reading. Some readers struggle to read unfamiliar words, because their reading books do not contain words they can use their phonics knowledge and skills to read.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Most pupils are confident and take pride in their work. They enjoy coming to the school and show positive attitudes to their learning. The large majority of pupils sustain their focus on work without prompting.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. This means that pupils work hard, concentrate well and enjoy learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe outside of the school, including when using the internet. This is because leaders have designed a strong culture of safeguarding in the curriculum. The local police further enhance pupils' understanding by talking to them about the dangers of drugs and how to stay safe online.
- Respect and tolerance are reflected in the Christian ethos of the school, and pupils have a clear understanding of their importance. Pupils also recognise that there are a range of faiths in modern-day Britain and show tolerance towards everyone.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely happens in their school and that, when it does, it is dealt with very quickly and appropriately.
- The sports premium funding is used effectively to promote pupils' well-being, so that pupils have increased access to a range of sporting activities and events, such as fitness equipment on the school field. Daily fitness breaks, such as the daily mile, ensure that pupils understand the relevance of exercising for increasing concentration levels back in the classroom.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- During lessons, pupils are well behaved and most concentrate well on their work. Only on rare occasions, when the work is not challenging enough, does the attention of a few pupils drift a little.
- There have been fewer incidents of poor behaviour as the year has progressed. This is because the curriculum supports pupils to help them learn restorative strategies to maintain their friendships.
- Pupils' attendance is at least in line with national averages and few pupils are persistently absent from the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Leaders' actions have led to an improvement in pupils' outcomes. The small number of pupils in each year group means that each pupil's performance has a marked effect on the school's overall figures. Since the previous inspection, the very large majority of pupils attain expected standards in reading and writing at the end of key stage 2. Together with their strong progress in personal development, this means pupils are well prepared for the transfer to secondary school.
- Progress in reading and writing is consistently improving in key stage 2. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils currently in the school are making good or better progress in

all year groups. Improvements in teaching have led to improved learning in reading, writing and mathematics over a three-year period.

- In key stage 1, pupils make good progress from their various starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, pupils are increasingly working at greater depth in reading.
- Pupils' writing at the end of key stage 2 is particularly strong. The work of some pupils is exceptional, displaying a complexity of sentence structure, vocabulary and punctuation well above that expected for their age. Staff celebrate good writing, through displays which encourage and motivate pupils.
- The proportion of pupils achieving expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 is broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in reading and writing has been above national averages for the last two years.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the required standard in phonics was below average in 2018.
- Progress in geography is not as strong as in other subjects, due to less emphasis on this subject in the curriculum.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- The majority of children enter the early years with skills below those normally expected for their age, particularly in areas of communication and language. Although cohorts are small, there is a high percentage of disadvantaged children. Staff use a highly effective assessment system to identify the specific needs of children who require additional support with language and communication. These children receive specialist support, which enables them to make strong progress in language and communication.
- Teachers tailor the curriculum to the needs and interests of the children. For example, adults created a hair salon in the provision for role play, after staff observed the children 'brushing' their hair with wooden cubes during the previous week. This awareness in children's interests ensures a high level of relevance and engagement in children's learning.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have been trained to develop pupils' language skills. The impact of this can be seen in adults' effective interactions with children. For example, four boys who were 'fixing' a hole in the road in the outdoor area were supported by an adult asking questions. In turn, this prompted the children to tell a story about the 'ginormous' monster who made the hole during the previous night.
- Staff ensure that indoor provision helps to promote all areas of learning. Challenges are set in areas to promote curiosity and extend children's thinking. Children are focused and organised and access a range of resources independently. They show a keen interest in early writing, for example, as they use sticky notes as envelopes to write letters.
- Children learn to share and take turns, through the activities set up by teachers. As a result, children learn to develop attitudes of care and concern for each other and for

living things, such as the small garden area. Children listen carefully to adults and to each other. They are polite and behave well.

- Parents and carers are extremely pleased with the early years provision and how it has developed over recent years. One parent said that her child has had a 'tremendous amount of support'. A variety of opportunities are offered for parents to understand learning. For example, stay and play and home link activities are provided at the school and the details of these are emailed to parents who are unable to come into the school regularly. Parents' feedback from the school's own survey is very positive.
- Safeguarding is a high priority. The early years leader ensures that staff understand the procedures to keep children safe. Risk assessments for the entire provision are followed and adapted when necessary. Consequently, children are happy and confident in the learning environment.



## School details

Unique reference number	107995
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10087517

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Greenhalgh
Headteacher	David Roundtree (executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01937 583 379
Website	<a href="http://www.stjameswetherby.leeds.sch.uk">www.stjameswetherby.leeds.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:davidroundtree@spherefederation.org">davidroundtree@spherefederation.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2017

## Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above the national average.
- Most of the pupils are White British. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- Children from three to five years of age have full- or part-time provision in the Nursery. In Reception, children receive full-time education. Pupils in the main school are taught in mixed-age classes.
- In 2016, the school federated with Scholes (Elmet) Primary School and Moortown Primary School to form the Sphere Federation. They have a single governing body. The schools share the same executive headteacher. He is a national leader of education.

- The head of school was permanently appointed in January 2018, after five months as acting head of school. There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school organises its own after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning throughout the school. Observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher. In addition, the inspector scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the executive headteacher, head of school and other leaders and managers from within the federation. The inspector also held a meeting with the school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- The inspector talked to pupils during their breaktimes and lunchtimes. The inspector met with five teachers separately.
- School documents were scrutinised. These included safeguarding checks, information about pupils' achievement, records of checks on the quality of teaching, risk assessments, and attendance and behaviour analysis.
- The inspector looked at the school's own evaluation of its work. Reports to the governing body were considered, together with minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- The inspector received 10 comments from parents sent by text and spoke to parents as they brought their children to the school.
- The inspector also took account of the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 12 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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