

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St James CofE Primary School

Grotto Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8PL

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 June 2025

Outcome

St James CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school each day. They are well supported through the school's nurturing approach. Pupils can share any worries they may have with staff and the class's 'worry monster'. They know that the school will take their concerns seriously as they feel 'staff really listen' to them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Expectations for pupils' achievement are high. Pupils rise to meet these daily. They welcome the challenging work their teachers set for them. Pupils show resilience with their learning and have a healthy attitude to making mistakes. Across the school, pupils behave well. They embody the school's values and show remarkable respect to each other and the staff that are committed to supporting them.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. There are many opportunities for them to develop their interests. They value the array of clubs and enjoy learning a different musical instrument each year. Pupils are proud of their outdoor spaces. They learn about a healthy diet by growing their own vegetables in the allotment. Pupils can enjoy the mindfulness garden if they want to enjoy a quiet space at breaktimes. The eco-council teaches pupils about the importance of looking after their community.

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

The school has a broad and rich curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. It is carefully sequenced and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils explore information that builds on what they have learned previously. In the early years, there is a language-rich environment designed to support children's speech and communication as soon as they start school.

Teachers have expert subject knowledge. They routinely provide opportunities for pupils to use technical vocabulary in discussion. This helps pupils to apply this vocabulary accurately in their written work. Staff present new material clearly. They check pupils' learning regularly, adapting their explanations well to make sure pupils understand what they need to do. At times, when teachers help pupils recall prior learning, they do not always check that all pupils have understood before moving on to new or deeper learning. This means some pupils have not grasped important concepts and continue to have gaps in their understanding.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well so they can access the same ambitious curriculum. The school identifies pupils' additional needs early and puts effective support in place. Staff adapt teaching carefully and review support regularly. They use visual prompts and engaging resources to help pupils succeed. Pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points.

The school makes reading a high priority. Children are taught to read from the beginning of Reception. Expert staff teach phonics with precision. As a result, pupils achieve well in reading. Ongoing checks by teachers help to identify pupils who need additional support. Timely interventions ensure that pupils become increasingly confident readers over time. Beyond the phonics programme, the school has increased the amount of time pupils spend reading. Daily fluency and comprehension lessons ensure pupils read widely. Pupils excitedly share their love of reading.

Staff set clear and high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are attentive learners, who show sustained levels of concentration in the classroom. Those who need additional help to manage their behaviour benefit from the support they receive. In the early years, children know the importance of taking turns and they sensibly share equipment. Leaders have created a caring environment, where pupils want to come to school. As a result, pupils attend well.

The well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum develops pupils' respectful attitudes to different cultures and faiths. Pupils have a mature understanding of difference and know that everyone 'deserves to be treated equally'. The numerous leadership roles available instil pride and develop responsibility in pupils. The school is determined to ensure that there is no barrier to pupils attending clubs and activities. The school makes appropriate adaptations to ensure pupils with SEND access the same wider experiences as their peers.

Leaders are driven to make decisions in the best interests of pupils. Governors share the school's high ambitions for pupils. They know the school's priorities well and provide effective support to ensure improvements to the school's work have a positive impact.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teachers' checks on pupils' knowledge and understanding are not as precise as they could be. This means that some pupils move on to more difficult concepts when they have not grasped the foundational knowledge they need. The school should ensure that staff have the skills they need to ensure learning checks are precise and consistent across the school.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	125163
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341577
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Greg Pearce
Headteacher	Rebecca Murphy
Website	www.stjames-veybridge.surrey.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The school is a voluntary controlled school in the Diocese of Guildford. The most recent section 48 inspection, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in July 2019.
- The school offers a before- and after-school club, overseen by the governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with the chair and members of the local governing body. He spoke on the telephone with representatives from the local authority and diocese.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to curriculum leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Stephen Cattell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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