

## Basic Skills Quality Mark (BSQM) – Visit Feedback Report

**School name**      St James' Church of England Primary School

**Headteacher**     Mrs Jan Holmes

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**Alliance BSQM Assessor**    Mr Dave Woodhouse

**Visit date**        12.01.16

**Assessor**

**date**

<b>Purpose of Visit</b>	<b>ISAR</b>
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The Assessor spoke with the following people

<b>Headteacher and/or Senior Leaders</b> YES	<b>Literacy Subject Leader</b> YES	<b>Numeracy Subject Leader</b> YES	<b>Assessment Manager</b> YES
<b>SENCo</b> YES	<b>Pupil representatives</b> YES	<b>Governor representative(s)</b> No	<b>Parent representative(s)</b> YES

<b>'Learning Walk' completed?</b> YES	<b>Relevant evidence-base reviewed?</b> YES
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**The previous development points have been considered and are implemented**

**Suggested areas for development in preparation for the next Quality Mark visit and links to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:**

- Continue to develop and embed the school's 'Steps for Success' by which teachers agree individual targets with pupils to aid their progress in aspects of writing across the curriculum. (Element 3)
- Identify purposeful opportunities across the curriculum that will engage pupils in using and applying the knowledge and skills they have learnt in Maths. (Element 1)

### 'Good practice' identified in relation to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:

- The school's assessment system has been carefully constructed so that it can both assess the progress made by pupils within the school year and judge by the end of the year whether pupils have met the age related expectations for their year group. A particular strength of the system is that it is closely linked to the weekly activities children undertake and the information from assessment is used to identify and address any gaps in learning as well as planning the next steps for further learning. Moderation, both in phase groups and as a whole staff, takes place within school to ensure consistency of judgements; in addition, the school is a member of a local group of schools who meet to moderate. (Element 10)
- Each pupil's progress is summarised on a termly basis using the following headings: 'Emerging', 'Developing', 'Secure' and 'Next Stage Ready'. This positive language acknowledges children's achievements while also providing an accurate summary of their current achievement. Collating the percentage of children in a class, year group and key stage, in each category enables senior leaders to monitor pupil progress throughout the school, report to governors and informs decision making. The school is aware that pupils with special educational needs may well make good progress from their individual starting points but still be well below the age related expectations of their peers by the end of the year and are looking at ways to ensure that the progress of pupils in this group is appropriately assessed, recorded and celebrated. (Element 2)
- Senior leaders and core subject leaders have an accurate understanding of pupil outcomes and the strengths and areas for further development in their subject. For example the school identified spelling as an area for development and has put in place a range of strategies to enable pupils to explore language and spell more accurately- especially boys. Work scrutiny is regularly undertaken in phase groups so that teachers can share best practice, ensure consistent high expectations and address any common weaknesses in pupil's work. Core subject leaders are allocated one afternoon each week to undertake their leadership and management responsibilities. (Element 10)
- Professional development planning is informed both by new government requirements and school self-evaluation. Recent training has included teaching Maths, grammar and spelling and ICT including the use of apps in English and Maths teaching. A member of staff is about to attend training on reciprocal reading. (Element 6)
- The curriculum is well designed to meet the needs of all pupils and provides sufficient time to teach English and Maths and many opportunities for pupils to apply those skills across the curriculum in engaging ways. For example, the creative curriculum which includes History and Geography provides opportunities for pupils to apply their

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reading, writing, speaking and listening skills both in the process of learning as well as the outcomes. On the day of the Quality Mark visit children were involved in a design technology day which required them to measure accurately to produce a large puppet-like figure out of cardboard. An 'Alice in Wonderland' week of activities is planned for the near future which will involve children and parents. Opportunities for extended writing in a variety of subjects have been identified and embedded. (Element 8)

- Homework strikes a good balance between reinforcement of basic skills studied in class, such as learning spellings and multiplication tables, and opportunities, through the creative curriculum for children to select or suggest aspects of the topic they would like to explore further outside the taught school day. In a Year 5 classroom, for example, on a display board dedicated to homework, there were a number of specialist studies children had undertaken connected to the History topic. (Element 6)
- Reading is given a high profile in the school and each class, as part of shared reading, reads the work of a different author. Children are then encouraged to choose and read independently other books by the same author. In addition any books that the teacher refers to and reads from in class, including non-fiction texts, are made available in the class book box for all children to browse through or read in depth. Reading scheme books are carefully classified according to reading age and well organised in bookcases in the corridors, frequently below displays promoting a range of books or characters from a popular children's book. All pupils questioned said they enjoyed reading in school but more girls than boys said they chose to read regularly at home as a leisure activity. (Element 7)
- The school makes good use of time at the beginning of the day (15 minutes) whereby either the teacher or the teaching assistant, on a fortnightly basis, hear children read or talk to them about what they have read. This strategy ensures those children who aren't heard reading at home do read regularly. It is also beneficial to pupils who can decode accurately (especially boys) to have some 1:1 time with an adult to talk about what they have read informally and hopefully view reading as an enjoyable, sociable activity. (Element 4)
- Significant investment in books as well as fixtures and fittings has been made to establish a new library, which is almost complete. As well as providing an enjoyable environment where children can relax and browse through books they will also be able to borrow books to take home. Year 6 pupils will be involved in running the library in the afternoons. (Element 8)
- The school has a clear strategy to try and promote to parents the importance of reading for enjoyment with their children. Strategies include providing information about children's books for parents as well as organising parent workshops and running fun activities. The school plans to explore introducing a parent app for parents who may not be able to get into school but want to keep up to date with school activities using their mobile phone rather than having to visit the school website. (Element 9)

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- Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed and work in close partnership with the classroom teacher. For example after a whole class introduction by the teacher a group of pupils worked with the teaching assistant to reinforce some aspects of learning they had found difficult in a previous lesson. At a later point in the lesson the teacher worked with that group on aspects of the work being studied today while the teaching assistant supported other pupils. This is an example of best practice. (Element 5)
- The school runs a range of interventions to meet the needs of pupils, a number of which take place in class. Pupils are also targeted for additional support through enjoyable extra-curricular activities such as the Chatterbox reading group for specific Year 3 pupils to aid their transition in meeting the reading demands and expectations of key stage 2. (Element 4)
- The learning environment, both in classrooms and around the school, is both engaging and supportive of developing independent learners - which is a school aim. With regard to the new curriculum becoming an independent learner is important for pupils if they are to problem solve and use and apply knowledge learnt in English and Maths in a variety of contexts with decreasing reliance upon their teacher. (Element 8)
- There are working walls for both Maths and English in all classrooms which aim, as one example, to extend pupils' vocabulary. Words scribed by the teacher were large enough for pupils to read and use wherever they were sitting in the classroom. In a Year 5 class, a sheet of flip chart paper which had been used to demonstrate during whole class teaching to pupils the stages in tackling a three part calculation had been retained from a previous lesson and added to the working wall as an aid to learning. Age appropriate help desks which include amongst other items, vocabulary or number lines were available for pupils to access. Pupils could also choose maths activities with 3 different levels of challenge. (Element 8)
- Evidence in books and conversations with pupils indicate that teaching and learning in Maths places, due emphasis on reasoning, fluency and problem solving in line with the requirements of the revised primary national curriculum. Pupils said they enjoyed Maths lessons because you had to think about the way to tackle challenges, and there wasn't just one right answer. For example, pupils had to think how many ways you could make 20 using number bonds and different operations. These approaches are examples of best practice. (Element 7)

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