

St George's Beneficial CofE Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116346
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	357948
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Edward Wheatley

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Robinson
Headteacher	Sandra Gibb
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 13 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body, the school improvement partner and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at documentation about pupils' progress, school development planning and evidence of self-evaluation. They considered questionnaires returned by 105 parents or carers and 62 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The achievement of all groups of pupils, especially in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching and how well the school has dealt with recent changes in staffing.
- How well the school is working to reduce absence.
- How quickly the school is working to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a small school. Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds but a minority come from minority ethnic groups. Some of these pupils start school, or join the school, during the school year speaking little or no English. The main other languages spoken are Arabic, Polish, Bengali, French, Russian and Turkish. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and some of these are based in the school's learning support unit. These pupils have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs, behavioural, emotional and social difficulty, and autism, dyslexia or visual impairment. The school has national Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two mixed Nursery and Reception classes. There is a private pre-school establishment on the same site as the school, which was not part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St George's is a good school. Attainment is broadly average and rising. Pupils' progress is generally good and improving, although occasionally a small number of pupils do not make quite the progress they could. Progress fell a little, as the recent end of Key Stage 2 assessments in mathematics showed, but has improved again because of the school's focus on strengthening basic calculation skills. Boys' writing skills were below those of girls, but work to develop literacy skills generally and to provide reading resources that capture boys' interest are having a positive effect. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those joining the school speaking little or no English, make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those from the learning support unit make good progress.

The great majority of parents are happy with the school and the progress their children make. A comment, reflecting the responses of many parents is: 'My child looks forward to going to school and is exceeding some of his targets.'

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. Pupils say the school deals with the rare instances of bullying very well. Attendance has improved and is average. However, a small minority of pupils continue to miss school, some through holidays taken during term time. Pupils behave well, with respect for each other and adults. They are very considerate towards new arrivals, especially those who do not speak English. Within school, they take responsibilities seriously and those on the school council are good representatives of other pupils' opinions. Pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is good and most take part in physical activities. Given pupils' broadly average levels of attainment, preparation for their future lives is satisfactory.

Teaching is good. Lessons are planned well, and for the most part work is challenging and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Occasionally, pupils' work lacks challenge and sometimes adults do not identify quickly enough where pupils have difficulty in order to help them. Pupils generally know how well they are doing and what their targets are. Assessment of progress is generally good, work is marked well with guidance on how pupils can improve, and what the next steps in learning are. The curriculum is good and provides a wide range of experiences that capture pupils' enthusiasm and encourage them to learn. The range of out-of-school activities is good and well attended. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those in the learning support unit is good. Although teachers know how well pupils in the learning support unit are doing, their records are not detailed enough to guide other staff in determining the next steps in pupils' learning.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good, especially for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and for their families. Pupils feel secure approaching any adult for help, and the school provides a strong Christian family ethos in which pupils can grow and

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mature. Support and care for pupils from families newly arriving in the area are good. Links with families are very good and the transition to secondary school is managed very well. Pupils in the learning support unit are well supported with a planned programme to rejoin their classes. Pupils in the after-school club are well looked after. They are well supervised and cared for, and enjoy the practical activities that are provided for them.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and other leaders have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They initiate improvements with urgency and evaluate how effective they are. New staff are supported effectively and helped to settle in quickly. The governing body is increasingly well informed, supportive and challenging. Plans to improve accommodation in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well advanced. The issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, progress is improving, attainment is rising and the capacity for further improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment by July 2011 by:
 - ensuring work is consistently challenging
 - closely monitoring pupils' progress in lessons and providing help quickly when they need it.
- Provide guidance for staff in the learning support unit immediately, by recording individual pupils' progress and identifying what the next steps in their learning are.
- Improve attendance of pupils who are persistently absent by impressing on them and their families the importance of unbroken attendance to ensure maximum progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enter the school with below average expectations for their age, particularly in literacy. However, all groups enjoy learning and work hard to progress well in an atmosphere of encouragement and support. They learn and use a wide vocabulary. They speak well and their writing, especially that of the boys, shows competent use of grammatical conventions to give meaning to what they say. Pupils learn to speak and write for different purposes well. For example, in a lesson where pupils watched a video clip, they analysed speech into opinion and fact proficiently, and then enthusiastically planned detailed arguments for closing down a camp. Numeracy skills have improved due to the school's effective focus on strengthening mathematical processes. In a lesson on division, reinforcement of different ways to express mathematical problems, and making pupils explain the 'chunking' process they use, effectively reinforced an important mathematical procedure. Pupils speaking little or no English on arrival at the school develop a wide vocabulary and the confidence to use it in their speech and interaction with other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the learning support unit make good progress because of sensitive and patient support to overcome learning and emotional difficulties.

Pupils feel confident to express their own views, sure that they will be respected. For example, relatively newly arrived pupils from abroad spoke about their own cultures

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willingly to other pupils in school, and in the local church, because they knew other pupils would be interested. School council members support pupils in the playground when they are lonely. Pupils raise funds for people they perceive as less well off than themselves and they are actively involved in church activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a very good understanding and respect for the cultures and traditions represented in the school, and increasingly so of other people around the world.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are fun and pupils enjoy learning. Teachers plan activities that catch pupils' interests and their enthusiasm transfers well to pupils. Work is mainly challenging, although occasionally work is not matched fully to pupils' abilities, but this is improving. The pace of work is generally brisk and mostly teachers keep a close watch on how well pupils are progressing and where they may be in difficulty. Questioning and discussion are used well to promote learning. For example, the careful prompting and encouragement of pupils to identify the next number in a sequence, and to explain why they chose a particular number, were effective in promoting understanding and consolidation of multiplication. Marking keeps pupils well informed about how well they perform and how to improve, and pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do next. In

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general, assessment records are extensive and used well to plan future lessons, but this is not so well established in the learning support unit.

The curriculum is well organised to provide many opportunities to promote pupils' enthusiasm for school. Challenge weeks in technology, science and art add creativity to the curriculum and help develop pupils' problem-solving skills. Imaginative ways of covering historical issues enliven pupils' learning, and give them opportunities to improve their writing skills. For example, encouraging pupils to imagine themselves as tourist guides on the River Nile encouraged them to learn about ancient Egypt and reinforced their descriptive writing skills. Support activities for gifted and talented pupils are well established and the school is working effectively with external agencies to improve the use of outdoor areas for learning.

The quality of care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is very good. Effective support for pupils in the learning support unit ensures they gain confidence and basic skills in a secure environment and rejoin their own classes as soon as they can. Strategies to deal with absence are slowly leading to improving attendance. Pupils and most parents appreciate the effective procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour of all kinds.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively. After a period of significant changes, new and established staff are working successfully to steer through improvements in teaching and learning. The governing body has also experienced significant changes, and support and training are increasing the involvement and effectiveness of governors in helping to drive improvements. The school has worked successfully through a wide range of activities and events to increase the involvement of parents in supporting their children's learning, especially reading and writing.

Safeguarding requirements are fully met. The governing body and staff contribute to ensuring safety and security, and pupils' and parents' views are taken into account. Partnerships with external agencies are used effectively to promote pupils' well-being and the school has a wide range of increasingly effective links with other schools to support the curriculum, especially in sports. The school promotes cohesion in school and the local community well and its links with the church are a significant part of this. It has a small but increasing range of links at the national and international level and is working hard to make these more substantive in developing pupils' understanding and knowledge of the

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values and beliefs of other cultures. The school works well to promote equal opportunities and efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination are extremely effective.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

By the time children enter Year 1 attainment is broadly average although a small core of children who started school speaking little or no English have literacy skills well below those expected for their age. Children generally make good progress, especially in their social and emotional skills. They work and play well together. They learn to play independently and use their imagination extensively. For example, a child 'took a photograph' with a 'camera' made from wheels and axles from a construction kit. They approach adults with confidence and readily try to write with the wide range of mark-making resources. Teaching and the curriculum are good. Occasionally, adults tell children too much rather than encourage them to come up with their own ideas, but leaders are aware of this and are working on training staff to resolve this. Welfare procedures are effective. Relationships with families and the private on-site pre-school are good and transition into Year 1 is well organised. Leaders have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and are working hard to ensure the planned new accommodation will fully meet children's needs.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About half the questionnaires were returned and in these parents and carers are generally very positive in their views of the school. A small number feel that the school does not deal with poor behaviour well enough. Inspectors saw only good behaviour and pupils said that occasional poor behaviour is dealt with well. A smaller number of parents also feel that their children are not well prepared for the future and that the school does not take account of their concerns. However, inspectors found that overall pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future and that the school has good systems to respond to parents' concerns and, where fitting, parents' views are taken into account.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St George's Beneficial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	56	45	43	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	57	39	37	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	57	54	39	37	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	46	51	49	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	57	54	41	39	5	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	51	42	40	6	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	43	53	50	5	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	42	40	43	41	8	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	40	52	50	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	39	48	46	9	9	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	36	54	51	8	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	42	48	46	4	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	60	36	34	4	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Beneficial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Portsea, PO1 3BN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You told us a lot about your school, and we agree with you about it being a good school.

- You make good progress right through the school.
- Teaching is good. There are many interesting activities in lessons and you are encouraged to work hard.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well to help the school improve.
- You say the school is safe and we agree with you. Most of you know how to stay safe yourselves.
- You behave well and you treat each other well, especially those new children coming to the school who cannot yet speak English.
- The school takes good care of you, particularly those of you needing special support and those in the after-school club.
- You know how to stay healthy and almost all of you take part in physical activities and eat healthily.
- You carry out any responsibilities you have very well.

In order for the school to be even better, we are asking your teachers to do the following things:

- improve your attainment by making sure work is always hard enough, and that you know how to get on and make good progress in your work
- make sure there is a good record of how well pupils in the learning support unit are doing, and useful information about what they should do next, so that staff can plan lessons
- improve attendance by making sure families know that pupils are most likely to make good progress if their attendance at school is good.

You can all help by asking if you think work is too easy or you do not understand.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector

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