

St George's Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	127133
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	360112
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Ronald Hall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Crabb
Headteacher	Trevor Jameson
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 24 lessons, observing 20 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, middle managers, pupils and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including: assessment and tracking data; samples of the monitoring of teaching and learning; school planning; and, attendance data. Inspectors scrutinised documents regarding safeguarding. Questionnaires returned from 86 parents and carers, 30 staff and 86 pupils were analysed.

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

- The impact of the school's actions to raise attainment and progress, especially of higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- How well teachers use assessment to match work to ability to ensure a good pace of learning for different groups of pupils, especially higher attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the different areas of learning from their assessed starting points, and how this relates to the school's assessment of progress in Key Stage 1.
- Whether pupils' personal development and well-being and the quality of care, guidance and support are as good as the school indicates. Whether pupils' personal development and well-being and the quality of care, guidance and support are as good as the school indicates.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school where most pupils are of White British heritage. The school has Foundation Status. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is lower than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average and their needs vary from general learning difficulties to those with behavioural and/or physical disabilities. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has a number of awards reflecting its commitment to healthy lifestyles and physical education. There are two privately run pre-schools on the school site.

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

This is a good, and rapidly improving, school which is well respected within its local community. Pupils are well cared for and helped to do their best. They say they feel very safe and enjoy school, which is confirmed by parents' and carers' views. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, which is clearly demonstrated in their daily lives. This is confirmed by parents' and carers' views. Attendance is average, but improving, due to the good work of the school in conjunction with partner agencies in reaching the small number of persistent absentees. This approach is not as robust with those who take occasional days off school. Staff, governing body, pupils, parents and carers are proud of their school.

Pupils' attainment is above average and progress is good across the school and accelerating. Progress is rapidly improving in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to its outstanding leadership, but slows a little in Key Stage 1 due to occasional inconsistencies in approach, before accelerating rapidly in Key Stage 2. In all areas of the school, there is a very specific and successful focus on individual needs. Pupils know their targets and articulate these well. Teachers provide good academic support. Pupils' books demonstrate clear and rapid improvement in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils have regular access to laptop computers and other facilities such as cameras and, as a result, their skills have grown and are used effectively across the whole curriculum to both enhance and enrich their work. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development create a positive and caring ethos in the school. The school has good tracking and assessment systems to plan for individual learning. Middle managers consistently analyse and use data to raise attainment, particularly for higher attaining pupils. While teachers' planning matches learning objectives closely to pupils' needs, the intended outcomes for pupils are not always clear enough in Key Stage 1. There is a high level of teamwork between teachers and support staff that results in good interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A parent wrote, 'The school is fantastic. The headteacher and all staff are there for the children to help them achieve according to their own individual abilities.'

The unity of vision and drive under the leadership and management of the senior leadership team, middle managers, staff and governing body are the main factors behind the school's success. Rigorous self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses has led to very effective strategies to bring about improvement. The school has generated a robust momentum for development and has the systems and personnel in place to ensure this happens. A prime example is the deputy headteacher's outstanding, bold and effective approach to resolving issues in teaching and learning, resulting in a marked and rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. She spends a large proportion of time mentoring, supporting and developing the staff, resulting in a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching which is now good with

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outstanding features. A similar situation has taken place in the Early Years Foundation Stage where outstanding leadership has led to a complete review and redevelopment of the provision. As a result of these actions, gaps between different groups are closing quickly. The successful track record of the leadership and management team demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

◆ All teachers and teaching assistants focus on pupils' developing strengths as independent learners. For example, the support provided by teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is excellent. Work is well matched to their needs and the curriculum adapted to ensure full inclusion. The curriculum is well balanced and increasingly imaginative and creative, particularly so in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. This is further enhanced by the excellent partnerships the school has forged to provide varied and imaginative enrichment and enhancement opportunities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress in Key Stage 1 by ensuring all teachers give clear explanations to pupils of the skills and knowledge they are learning and provide a consistently practical and imaginative curriculum.
- Improve attendance to above national averages by December 2011 by following the established procedures for reducing absenteeism with greater rigour.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment on entry varies widely. For many it is broadly in line with age-expected levels, but for a significant proportion of pupils it is well below this. Evidence, as seen in lessons and pupils' books, shows that pupils achieve well, especially in mathematics, reading and writing. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were eagerly studying the characteristics of angles in real-life situations, before evaluating their own work and discussing how this could be improved. The lesson was well paced, imaginatively presented and had clear lesson objectives linked to precise outcomes, which resulted in pupils both enjoying and having a clear understanding of their learning. This approach is consistent in Key Stage 2, resulting in progress and attainment accelerating rapidly. In a Key Stage 1 English lesson on empathy skills, pupils were not fully engaged in learning because the curriculum was more formal in approach and there was a lack of pace and clarity about what they were learning. However, in a good Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson based on number bonds, pupils were engaged in a range of activities linked to real life situations and made good progress. It is this inconsistency which has resulted in the good progress in Key Stage 1 not being as rapid as in the rest of the school.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as tasks are set to match their learning needs. Pupils of all ability were very clear about their individual targets which were displayed prominently in classrooms and books. Good learning took place because pupils were well informed about what they need to do to improve. Pupils were ambitious to achieve above average levels of work. Tasks build on previous learning well, generating a good pace and leading to good progress across the school, with pupils clearly learning much from each other.

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◆ Pupils have developed outstanding social and interpersonal skills due to the excellent relationships they have with the adults in the school. Outstanding behaviour has led to pupils having positive learning attitudes and thoroughly enjoying their education. Pupils are being helped very successfully to grow up as caring, healthy, well-balanced young people. They show a good ability to reflect on issues which affect them, as well as a good experience of other cultures. Pupils have a key role in formulating school rules, are increasingly involved in their learning and have an active school council. Pupils use information and communication technology effectively and their basic English and mathematical skills are improving rapidly. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their future lives. Pupils have a very good understanding of the diversity of cultures within the school and local community, which ensures good cooperation and harmony between all groups. This is further reinforced by the national and international links the school has forged to develop further understanding.

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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Care, guidance and support are good due to excellent relationships and staff who really care for the pupils. This is especially so for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities whose confidence and independence are promoted exceptionally well. There are strong systems to record and evaluate information which have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Outstanding partnerships with outside agencies, such as the educational

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psychology service, speech therapists, education welfare officers and other groups and schools provide the pupils with a very wide range of opportunities. These have assisted in the rapid rise in attainment and progress, as well as providing diversity to the curriculum. An excellent example of this is the link with the National Sailing Academy, which promotes confidence and self-esteem and provides a variety of learning opportunities. Increasingly successful pastoral support goes hand in hand with good academic assessment that leads to challenging targets for both pupils and the school as a whole.

◆ Assessment information is used well to plan work at different levels. Pupils know how to make improvements to their work due to good academic guidance. Well-planned interventions in mathematics and English have a positive effect on the learning of groups of pupils and the school as a whole. In line with the rapid and marked improvement in teaching and learning, in the large majority of lessons seen pupils were highly challenged and learning was well paced. However, in the few lessons in Key Stage 1 where teaching was not as strong, pace and a lack of clarity of learning outcomes were issues. Successful changes in developing a creative and imaginative curriculum, which pupils say they enjoy, have a very positive impact on improving progress and achievement. Computers are effectively used to enhance learning and provide research opportunities for pupils. The curriculum is supported effectively with an excellent range and number of extra-curricular opportunities. These are popular and well attended by all groups of pupils.

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?

Good leadership and management by the senior management team, middle managers and the governing body are behind the constant drive to improve. Good planning and procedures ensure the commitment of all concerned to school improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on robust monitoring of evidence and thorough analysis of data by senior leaders. All evaluation is communicated effectively to staff, pupils, parents and carers. Challenging targets are set and used effectively to gauge success. All staff are involved in school development. The very robust development and monitoring by the deputy headteacher of the quality of teaching and learning has been highly successful in bringing about rapid improvement. This has resulted in teaching improving from very low standards to over 90% of lessons seen in the inspection being good or better.

◆ The governing body provides challenge and has a very clear and accurate view of the school and members increasingly hold it to account. Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and result in pupils feeling exceptionally safe. Staff are well trained in child

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protection and safeguarding procedures and all statutory documentation is exemplary. The school has robust equal opportunities and discrimination procedures that ensure pupils are fairly treated and that gaps between groups are closing rapidly. Excellent links with the local community and other schools provide a range of opportunities to enhance and develop learning. Pupils have a strong understanding of the immediate area and have effective links to support the local community. The school is developing effective opportunities for pupils to appreciate the lifestyles and customs of people from other cultural backgrounds, for example through links with other schools both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

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	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Due to the outstanding leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the provision has undergone major changes. While the majority of children enter the provision with skills at age-expected levels, a minority have skills well below age-expected levels. However, due to the changes put into place, children make good and in many cases outstanding progress to leave the provision with skills broadly in line with, or above, the national average. Teaching has improved rapidly and the excellent relationships between adults and children, and between children and their peers, are very positive features. Staff work very well together and involve parents, carers and children in all aspects of learning. Language and communication skills are developed well due to the importance placed on them.

◆ The provision has also seen rapid improvement and is bright, informative, well-resourced and targeted to meet the needs of all the children. The leader has effectively improved the delivery of the learning goals so as to make learning fun and relevant. Rigorous daily safety checks ensure the children's health, welfare and safety are

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paramount. The outdoor provision is adequate, but has limitations. Links with one of the on-site pre-schools provides good opportunities to extend the children's play. However, due to the distance from the pre-school, this prevents constant free flow between the areas. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has ensured that there are robust plans in place to improve the outdoor area in the near future. Activities are fun, varied and very exciting. 'I'm finding pirate treasure!' exclaimed one child during a session on exploring the concept of weight. Excellent relationships with parents and carers underpin the school's good induction and care procedures. Staff know children well and make sure learning is fun. Teaching assistants interact with the children well and have their welfare and care at the heart of all they do. As a result of the outstanding leadership, teaching has rapidly improved and is very well monitored. Staff benefit from continual high quality professional development that results in children's good and, for some, outstanding progress. Planning is robust and assessment, tracking and recording systems are accurate and used effectively to inform future planning. Children are confident and have good social skills. A good example of this was a child's response when asked about their learning, 'We are practising weighing skills, we have to balance different things,' he gleefully explained.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

Although the number of replies was relatively low for the number of pupils in the school, the large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the care provided and feel staff are very approachable. Parents and carers are pleased with their children's experience at school. Typical of written comments were, 'I feel my child has a very positive attitude to learning which I believe is due to the quality of teaching and the influence from teachers,' and, 'The imaginative way subjects are taught is brilliant and enthusiastic and approachable teachers with lots of extra activities.' Parents and carers feel the children are seen as individuals and are happy in school. A small number of parents and carers identified concerns regarding behaviour, as shown in this comment, 'I have concerns about the "aggressive behaviour" in the playground occurring now and last year and anxiety that behaviour is not sufficiently supervised and perpetrators not monitored.' However, this view was not shared by the majority of parents and carers, and inspection findings found nothing but outstanding behaviour at all times. Others had concerns regarding the attainment and progress of higher attaining pupils, but evidence from the school's data and inspection evidence show this is not an issue in the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. George's Foundation 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 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 427 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	58	32	37	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	56	37	43	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	47	42	49	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	55	34	40	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	59	32	37	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	56	35	41	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	45	45	52	2	2	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)	38	44	44	51	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	53	36	42	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	53	36	42	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	38	43	50	7	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	37	43	47	55	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	58	34	40	2	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Foundation Primary School, Portland DT5 2BD

Thank you for your very courteous, polite and very warm welcome when we visited your school. We agree with you and found that your school is good and improving rapidly. We were particularly impressed with the way you all get on with each other and help make the school a very happy place.

You are being successfully helped to grow up as sensible, healthy, considerate young people who behave well. You progress well in your learning and this is rapidly accelerating due to good and, at times, outstanding teaching. All adults in the school take very good care of you and make sure you are treated fairly.

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by the staff, are improving your school well. Those of you who sometimes find work difficult are given good support to help you make good progress. The already good curriculum is being gradually changed and improved to help you to learn and enjoy school more. There is a good range of activities to do after school. There are many excellent visits and visitors to the school which all help you learn.

In order to be even better, we have asked the school to make progress in Years 1 and 2 as rapid as in the other areas of the school. We have asked teachers to ensure that they provide clear learning outcomes so that you all know exactly what you are learning and why. We have asked the school to raise attendance by using procedures rigorously to encourage all of you to attend school regularly.

We wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall Lead inspector

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