

St George's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123540
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	359460
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Shaw
Headteacher	Kay Miller (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2008
School address	School Road Clun, Craven Arms SY7 8JQ
Telephone number	01588 640229
Fax number	01588 640229
Email address	head.clun@shropshirelg.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed five teachers and seven lessons, and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, and tracking and assessment data. Inspection questionnaires were analysed from 57 parents and carers, 45 pupils and 15 staff.

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

- To what degree do pupils make consistent progress across the school?
- What are the quality and rigour of the school's tracking and assessment systems?
- What impact are subject leaders having on the quality of teaching and learning?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average. It takes pupils from a wide area including the local village, outlying farms and other small villages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils speak English as an additional language. There has been a high turnover of headteachers; four in the last six years. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher who has been in post since January 2010. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The school has achieved Healthy School Status, the Eco Green Flag award and the Gold Artsmark award.

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. It has some outstanding features in pupils' behaviour, the Early Years Foundation Stage, and its links with parents and carers. Leadership and management are good. In a relatively short time, the acting headteacher's energy and vision have transformed the school, so that a tangible enthusiasm and pride in the school are evident amongst pupils, staff, and parents and carers. She provides a very clear sense of purpose and direction, clearly linked to school improvement. Strong teamwork between the headteacher, senior staff and the local authority has ensured that teaching and learning have improved and clear priorities have been set for further improvement. Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school. As one commented: 'My children love the school. They are treated with respect in a place they feel safe. They are given every opportunity to excel in an environment that nurtures and values each and every child for who they are and who they have the potential to be.' Staff want the best for each child and, through working very closely with families, strive to achieve this goal.

Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above national averages. Arrangements for the evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning are good, and the quality of teaching in most lessons is good as a result. Pupils' personal development is good. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the need for healthy lifestyles. Parents and carers say their children really enjoy coming to school. Pupils agree enthusiastically, and this is reflected in above-average levels of attendance. The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of after-school activities and clubs, including physical activities. Arrangements for the pastoral care and safeguarding of pupils are good.

Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is tracked carefully and data are analysed rigorously to ensure any pupil falling behind is identified quickly, so that support can be provided. Since the acting headteacher took over responsibility, the school has, rightly, focused on strengthening tracking and analysis systems for English and mathematics. It has not yet applied the same rigorous procedures to the assessment of science. The school has excellent links with the local community but realises that it has not yet done enough to develop ties with groups elsewhere in the United Kingdom or overseas, or to evaluate the effectiveness of its provision for promoting community cohesion. The school has a good understanding of how well it is doing and what needs to be done next, and has a good capacity to maintain and sustain improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve assessment and tracking systems for science so that they are as rigorous as those currently used in English and mathematics.
- Broaden the impact of community cohesion by strengthening national and global links and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Although progress has been good or better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the lower school for a number of years, prolonged turbulence in teaching in Key Stage 2 led to only broadly satisfactory progress over the same period. However, the initiatives designed to improve achievement and progress in reading, writing and mathematics; improved teaching; and the rigorous use of data from the strengthened assessment and tracking systems have resulted in clear, measurable improvements in progress and attainment in Key Stage 2, particularly in pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. The school now plans to focus its energies on improving assessment and progress in science. Pupils are now making good progress across the school and the work seen during the inspection was above average in both key stages. Lesson observations confirm pupils' excellent behaviour, which ensures good relationships and a high level of attention and motivation in lessons. As a result, the quality of learning and progress across the school is consistently good and sometimes even better. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and, in some cases, excellent progress because of the effective support provided by class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies.

Pupils understand what constitutes an unsafe situation and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively by the school. They behave considerately towards each other and respond quickly to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves. They work well together and individually without the need for constant reminders. Pupils are interested in the school's health promotion strategies and understand the main threats to their health and how they can be avoided. They are very proud of their school community. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise leadership and to contribute to the local community and they willingly take on this responsibility. Pupils respect each other's needs and interests and are curious about the world around them, embracing new experiences enthusiastically. They are well-equipped for the future with their well-developed academic and social skills.

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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	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Good teaching was observed across the school, and some exemplary practice in a few lessons led to a very high level of motivation and enthusiasm. In a Year 4 and 5 lesson pupils edited a text about pirates. As a result of the teacher's excellent lesson management skills, high expectations and very good subject knowledge, pupils remained strongly motivated throughout the lesson and made very good progress in their understanding of the use of paragraphs. In a small proportion of lessons, the pace of learning slowed after a brisk introduction by the teacher and progress during the lesson was only broadly satisfactory as a result. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to engage all pupils in learning. They display strong subject knowledge and this enthuses and challenges pupils and contributes to their good progress. Most lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are routinely shared with pupils. Good classroom management skills ensure that pupils work well together and there are no marked differences in the responses of boys or girls. Carefully targeted questioning draws out pupils' ideas and develops their thinking and reasoning skills.

The support provided by teaching assistants is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, especially for individual pupils with additional learning needs. Through their involvement in recording and analysing the data for the pupils in their classes, teachers are acutely aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on them. Pupils

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understand how they can improve their work and are supported in doing so. Carefully adapted activities ensure that all groups of pupils experience success and, following recent revisions to the curriculum, staff are beginning to link subjects to make learning more meaningful. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of visits and visitors and extra-curricular activities which are much enjoyed by the pupils. Collaboration with other schools further enriches the pupils' learning. Links with specialist services support the development of the wider curriculum well. The school's good arrangements for the care of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, contribute to their good development and well-being and support their learning very well.

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?

The acting headteacher has successfully communicated her high expectations about continuing to improve provision. She has identified and has tackled areas requiring improvement with rigour, while building effectively on the school's existing successes. She has galvanised the enthusiasm of staff and developed a very strong team, determined to do the best for each child. As a result, teaching is good and planning is founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data.

The school has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. This effective liaison with parents and carers and other partners contributes significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being. The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement. The performance of pupils is tracked very closely, with particular attention to the performance of different groups. It is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. As a result, St George's is a highly inclusive school and all pupils are able to take full advantage of all it has to offer.

The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school, and is now fully and systematically involved in evaluating its work. It has rigorous systems and adopts recommended good practice to ensure that pupils and staff are safe, and that staff at all levels discharge their duties effectively. Well-developed quality assurance and risk assessment systems take due account of the views of pupils as well as their parents and carers. The school integrates issues about safety into the curriculum so that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school makes satisfactory provision for community cohesion. It has excellent links with the local community and is in the early stages of developing links with schools in the United Kingdom and in Tanzania, but has yet to fully evaluate the effectiveness of its provision. The school provides good value for money.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an outstanding education. Children achieve very well from starting points that vary significantly from year to year but are broadly in line with expectations for their age. By the time they leave to join the Key Stage 1 class, they are confident and independent learners. All the children thrive in an overwhelming atmosphere of care, nurture and support. Each child is fully included in what is offered and they, and their parents and carers, are cared for as individuals. The Nursery and Reception class plays a central part within the community and is greatly valued by parents and carers. Children love being at school; they have highly positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. Because their welfare is exceptionally well provided for, they flourish in the very secure and safe environment. Parents and carers are unanimous in saying that they are happy with their children's experience at the school, and that their children enjoy school. One wrote: 'My son has thoroughly enjoyed his time in the Nursery and I have found staff to be exceptional in their approach and in the high quality of Early Years education provided.'

Each day, children thoroughly enjoy a wide and highly varied range of carefully planned and exciting activities, based on their own areas of interest, both indoors and out. The highly stimulating and welcoming indoor environment and the excellent outdoor provision provide rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of all children, including those with significant special educational needs, exceptionally well. Children confidently and independently move between the indoor and outdoor areas. Once a week, whatever the weather, they all take a trip to a local wooded area for 'Forest School' activities. These activities encourage the children to learn and develop exceptionally well. The skilled staff are always on hand to promote learning further by showing children how to draw the very best from the exciting activities. The acting headteacher works for three

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days per week in the Early Years Foundation Stage and her thoughtful, inspirational and wise leadership and management continue to underpin the success of the provision. Accurate and rigorous evaluation of all aspects of the school's provision and performance lead to actions that are well considered and effective in seeking to refine provision. She is supported exceptionally well by a very strong and experienced team of teachers and support staff, and each one makes a valuable contribution to the development and success of the provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above average for a primary school. The overwhelming majority declared themselves to be extremely satisfied with the school, an exceptional response reflecting the school's outstanding links with parents and carers. All agreed that their child enjoys school, that the school keeps their child safe, that teaching at the school is good, and that the school encourages a healthy lifestyle; all declared themselves happy overall with the provision. The overwhelming majority agreed with all the other statements. There were many positive comments and very few minor concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St George's CofE 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 95 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	86	8	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	88	7	12	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	79	11	19	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	84	9	16	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	88	7	12	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	77	13	23	0	0	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)	41	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	81	11	19	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	67	17	30	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	67	17	30	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	82	8	14	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	89	6	11	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's CofE Primary School, Craven Arms, SY7 8JQ

Thank you so much for helping me and my colleague when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed meeting so many of you and observing you at work and at play. You made us feel very welcome and made our short visit very enjoyable. We were really impressed by your excellent behaviour at all times. I enjoyed watching lessons and talking with some of you.

You attend a good school that is a happy and friendly place. It is like this because your headteacher and staff are leading the school well. They give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They care for you well and make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves, be healthy and keep safe. They have a good understanding of how well you are doing and what progress you are making. It was good to hear from the school councillors about how you are helping to improve the school. You told us that you like your school very much and there are lots of things to do and enjoy.

We have asked the staff and governing body to do two things that we feel will help to improve your school.

Find better ways of finding out how well you are doing in science.

Strengthen links with schools in other parts of the United Kingdom and overseas, so that you can learn more about the lives of children from different backgrounds to your own.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis

Lead inspector

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