

St George's CofE Primary School (VA)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112889
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378597
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Joy Considine

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	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Wellens
Headteacher	Philip Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons taught by five teachers and they held meetings with senior leaders, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development plans, pupils' assessment and tracking information, minutes from governing body meetings and other documentation relevant to the inspection, including that relating to the safeguarding of pupils. Additionally they analysed the outcomes of questionnaires received from 31 parents and carers.

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

- How much progress do pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics?
- How well does teaching meet the needs of all pupils?
- How good is pupils' personal development?
- How effective is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves pupils from the local community. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than usual. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are from ethnic minority groups and those who speak English as an additional language is much lower than usual. There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and the Reception classes. The number of pupils has risen since the previous inspection and the school has been extended to provide additional classroom accommodation. The school has gained a number of awards including National Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

The school has improved since the last inspection and it now provides a good quality of education for pupils. This is largely due to the dedicated leadership of the headteacher and his skilled team of staff, and the governing body. One parent or carer wrote, 'My children love going to school and they are making excellent progress'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to school. This is successfully built on as they move through the school. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average, although it is higher in English than in mathematics. Throughout the school, all pupils now make good progress in English and mathematics. This is because the school has introduced systematic procedures to assess and track their achievement, and has put into place actions to support those pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Pupils' progress is slower in mathematics than in English because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving situations. Pupils enjoy their lessons and this is reflected in their attendance which has also improved and is now above average.

Teachers plan their lessons carefully to meet the learning needs of all pupils, taking into account what they can already do. They provide interesting activities that give pupils the opportunity to work in teams as well as independently and this makes a good contribution to pupils' economic well-being. Although most teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they do not always provide pupils with enough information about how they can improve the quality of their work, particularly in mathematics.

The curriculum is broad and balanced with an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. Although there is a whole-school overview of what is to be taught in each class, planning does not show how pupils are to learn skills and knowledge in some subjects sequentially and progressively. The curriculum is enriched with visits to nearby places of interest. Pupils enjoy taking part in local events, such as the town carnival, and their close links with the church enable them to make a positive contribution to their local community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. While pupils have a good understanding of their role within the school and the local community, their understanding of the lives, faiths and beliefs of people in other parts of the United Kingdom and the developing world is less clear.

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The school has been conspicuously successful in meeting the needs of those pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. They have worked in close partnership with external agencies to access the appropriate support to help those pupils to overcome barriers to their learning. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that incidents of racist behaviour or bullying are rare. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are good. All adults are carefully checked, and health and safety matters carefully monitored.

School leaders have an accurate understanding of their strengths and a clear view of what more needs to be done. Procedures for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching are well organised and teaching is now good. Leaders and managers have successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection and brought about further improvements, demonstrating the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics across the school to bring it into line with that of English by July 2012 by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in real-life, practical problem-solving activities
 - making more time at the beginning of lessons to explain more clearly what pupils are expected to learn and to do
 - ensuring that when marking pupils' work, teachers indicate what more pupils need to do to improve and give them opportunities to respond.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum by September 2012 by making sure that skills and knowledge underpinning individual subjects build on each other sequentially and progressively.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about the lives, beliefs and faiths of others by establishing links with schools in more diverse parts of the United Kingdom and other parts of the world, including Europe and the developing nations.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are expected to work hard in lessons and consequently they now make good progress in both English and mathematics, although it is better in English than in mathematics. This good achievement has been recognised by the award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities often make good progress from their starting points because they receive targeted support from skilled teaching assistants, often on a one-to-one basis. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and they contribute enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils are responsive to teachers' questioning and they enjoy collaborating on joint activities. This was seen in one lesson when pupils had to work in small groups to identify and

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analyse specific features of different types of poems. They confidently use information and communication technology skills to support their literacy and numeracy work.

Pupils say they feel safe because adults care for them and will help on the rare occasions when issues arise. The extra-curricular activities provided by the school, which include cookery, dance and sports, make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of a need to live a healthy lifestyle. The school has received the award of Healthy Schools in acknowledgement of this aspect of their work. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are friendly and polite, and show respect and consideration towards each other. During school worship, pupils reflect quietly and consider moral and social issues carefully. Pupils are gaining a satisfactory understanding of the lives and beliefs of those from other parts of the world through their fundraising activities for causes such as Children in Need.

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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most teachers make good use of assessment information to plan lessons that are well matched to the learning needs of pupils. The pace is usually brisk and lively, and teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to ask questions and to talk about what they have learned. In most lessons, teachers plan an interesting range of activities to meet the abilities of different groups of pupils. Teachers challenge pupils by asking probing questions to explore their understanding. For example, in one literacy lesson, the teacher asked pupils to suggest suitable alternative adjectives to make their

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

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sentences more interesting. Although teachers usually make good use of time, there are a few occasions when they do not spend enough time introducing the lesson, and a few pupils do not always understand what they are expected to do.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and it is enriched with a good range of activities to add to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils enjoy the visits they make to local places of interest, including Quarry Bank Mill and an air raid shelter in nearby Stockport. The school's close links with the church reinforce pupils' understanding of Christian values, although they also visit a synagogue and a mosque to develop their understanding of different faiths and beliefs. The school's good partnerships with other local schools enhance provision for additional sports, dance and drama activities. Although teachers' timetables show an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy, planning in some subjects does not always show how pupils are to develop their skills and knowledge sequentially and progressively.

Throughout the school, relationships between pupils and adults are warm and caring and this helps to create a positive atmosphere for learning. Good links with the local children's centre enable the school to access additional support and guidance for those pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. The school has created a well-equipped nurture room for pupils to use when they find some aspects of school difficult. This provides them with a calm, reassuring environment in which they can talk or spend time quietly thinking. The good arrangements for child protection ensure that pupils are kept safe. The school has successfully implemented actions to improve pupils' attendance and this is now above average. There are good induction arrangements for pupils who join the school, while older pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education owing to the strong partnerships with the local secondary school.

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 headteacher and senior leaders provide good leadership and have the drive and ambition to improve further. Teaching is systematically monitored and this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. School leaders use the outcomes of self-evaluation to create development plans with ambitious targets for improvement. Members of the governing body have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and they are developing their role in shaping the vision and direction of the school.

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Parents appreciate the 'open-door' policy and feel welcomed into school. One parent or carer wrote, 'The school provides a very caring education for pupils'. The school makes good use of other partnerships to support the curriculum and to provide additional expertise, such as the local authority support services, to help them to meet the needs of pupils. Equality of opportunity underpins the ethos and values of the school and consequently all groups of pupils are achieving well. All pupils are warmly welcomed into school regardless of background and discrimination on any grounds is firmly quashed.

There are thorough procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work at the school and those who visit. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. While school leaders have a good understanding of the context of the school within the local community, they have yet to develop links with schools in more diverse parts of the United Kingdom and the developing world. The school provides good value for money.

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	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

Staff have created a delightful environment into which children are warmly welcomed. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are typically well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in most aspects of their development so that by the time they leave the Reception class, their attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age. Children get on well together and they are able to share and to take turns. They listen to each other and to adults, and respond appropriately. They behave well and enjoy many activities that staff provide for them.

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

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Staff have a good understanding of the learning and developmental needs of children. They use assessment information effectively to plan activities that are well matched to the needs of children and, consequently, children make mainly good progress. There is a good balance of activities that are led by teachers and those that children are able to select for themselves. Although the outdoor area is well equipped, there are not yet enough opportunities for children to work and play outside as well as indoors.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She has been instrumental in bringing about improvements, such as the new programme to teach letters and sounds, and this is helping children to make better progress in reading. Relationships with parents and carers are good and help children to settle quickly into the routines of the school day. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to children's learning and development because they are managed well and play a key role in supporting children.

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

Those parents and carers who responded to the survey were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They say that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe and healthy. They feel that the teaching is good and that their children are making good progress. All parents and carers believe that the school is well led and managed and that they are happy with their children's overall experience at 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 CofE Primary School (VA) 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 123 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	74	7	23	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	81	6	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	65	11	35	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)	19	61	11	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	68	10	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	55	14	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	74	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	81	6	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	77	7	23	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's CofE Primary School (VA), New Mills, SK22 4NP

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you all and listening to what you had to say about your school. We found that your school has improved since the previous inspection and now provides you with a good quality of education.

You told us that you feel safe in school because adults care for you and that you enjoy the wide range of trips and visits which make your learning more enjoyable. You said that you enjoy learning. We found that most of you work hard and although you make good progress in English and mathematics, you could be doing even better in mathematics. This is what we have asked your school leaders to do to make your school even better.

- Make sure that you all do even better in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to use your knowledge to solve practical problems and telling you what you need to learn next.
- Make sure that, in planning lessons, teachers give you work that helps you build on what you can already do and understand.
- Provide you with more opportunities to learn about life in different parts of the country and other parts of the world.

I am sure that you will all continue to work hard and do your best and to help your school leaders to bring about the improvements we have identified. I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Lead inspector

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