

# St Gregory's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	113805
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	395676
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Paul Garvey

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ron Curtis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Wise
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	New Street Marnhull Sturminster Newton DT10 1PZ
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	25–26 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395676



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Garvey

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice, by one additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons and observed six teachers teaching for up to 40 minutes on each occasion. Afterwards, the inspector met with teachers to discuss his findings. A number of lessons were also visited for shorter periods to gather other information. Additionally, the inspector met with pupils, members of staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector listened to pupils read and analysed work in pupils' books. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school development plan, records of pupils' progress, and school self-evaluation documents. The 70 returned questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

## Information about the school

St Gregory's is a smaller than average-sized school for its type. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than that found nationally and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also lower than that found nationally. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average, as are the proportions of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and supported at school action plus. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and took up her post in September 2010 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2011. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school holds the Eco-Award and the Activemark. There is a pre-school onsite which is not managed by the governing body. The school runs a breakfast club for up to 12 pupils and an after school club on two days a week.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding as there are not enough outstanding lessons being taught. The starts of lessons are often not sharp enough to allow pupils rapid access to information and support. Also, marking is neither consistent in showing pupils how to achieve the next steps in their learning or in giving pupils an opportunity to respond to the teacher's comments. In addition, progress is limited by not enough use being made of the outdoor areas to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is good. Good progress in Reception is built upon through all years in the school and pupils leave with above average attainment.
- Teaching is consistently good, with examples of outstanding teaching where the pace allows pupils to progress rapidly towards achieving what their teacher expects of them. Intervention and support are well matched to individual pupils' needs through effective tracking of progress. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are ably supported in class by all adults.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and as a result behave well and attend well. Relationships between pupils and staff are secure and pupils feel safe as a result. The school caters well for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education through an engaging and creative curriculum and good partnership work. The curriculum is supported by a range of visits and extra-curricular opportunities which are enthusiastically embraced by pupils.
- Good progress has been maintained through a period of changes in leadership. Improvements in teaching quality have been achieved through the headteacher and the governing body managing teachers' performance, monitoring teaching quality carefully and effecting changes when needed.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding lessons being taught by July 2013 by:
  - making the starts of lessons sharper and giving pupils more responsibility, more quickly, to gain information and support which will allow them to

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- achieve their learning outcomes
- ensuring that marking is consistent in showing pupils how to achieve the next steps in their learning and that they are given the opportunity to show their teachers when these have been achieved.
- Increase the rate of pupil progress by:
  - developing the use of the outdoor areas to encourage the application of literacy and numeracy skills through experience of the natural environment.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' skills on entry to Reception are close to levels which would be expected nationally in most areas, but below in communication, language and literacy. By the time they leave in Year 6, attainment is above average for all groups of pupils and in all subjects. Progress across the school is thus good. Children gain sound basic skills in the Reception class and progress well to enter Key Stage 1 with level of skills appropriate to their age. This good acquisition of skills was seen in a lesson where children were learning about shapes. Very good planning allowed children to progress well, through participation in a wide range of engaging activities. Effective teaching and support from other adults ensured that children of all abilities made progress. Good progress, including for those with disabilities and those with special educational needs, continues through Key Stage 1 because of good teaching. A quick transition to individual work, from a whole-class explanation of how pupils could achieve the learning outcome, allowed Year 2 pupils to make rapid progress towards writing a diary entry for an Olympic athlete. Pupils enter Key Stage 2 with attainment, including reading, above average. Slower progress in the Year 4 and Year 5 class has, until recently, meant that Year 5 and Year 6 have had to make more rapid progress to catch up. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about progress, but leaders have taken effective measures to address weaknesses and the inspector found that pupils in all year groups are now achieving well.

Year 2 pupils showed that they had learned effective techniques to sound letters and help them to read new words. Higher ability pupils in Year 2 displayed confidence and fluency when reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils have above average skills in reading and a group of Year 6 pupils proudly showed off their library and said how much they enjoyed reading.

### Quality of teaching

Good teaching leads to good progress in the school for all groups of pupils, and most parents and carers who returned questionnaires agreed. The use of the Olympics as a curriculum theme week was cleverly interwoven into many lessons during the inspection. This reflected the good progress teachers have made in using a more

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creative curriculum in their planning. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils of all abilities were used as 'ambassadors' to go to different groups and tell their classmates what their group had learned about different Olympic sports. This promoted a good sense of responsibility and good social interaction between pupils of all levels of ability. An 'ambassador' from another table helping a higher ability group to spell 'pentathlon' was particularly noteworthy.

Effective tracking and a collegial approach to pupil support from all adults allow all groups of pupils to progress well. As a result, pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are quickly assessed and appropriate interventions are determined. An example of such effective tracking and support was seen in a Year 2 class. Careful organisation of groupings by the teacher enabled the teaching assistant to show her lower ability charges how to improve their draft copies of a diary entry for an Olympic athlete. Pupils were then able to progress outstandingly well. When pupils are quickly given responsibility for achieving their learning goal, they make outstanding progress. For example, a mixed class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils were learning about the 2012 Olympics in a literacy and ICT lesson. After listening to a letter written to them by a pupil in a partner school in Ghana, pupils rapidly moved to work in pairs to perform online research to write a return letter. Pupils were thus able to determine for themselves which research would be useful in achieving their goal. Social, moral, cultural and spiritual education was promoted extremely well and outstanding learning was the result. When teachers spend too long explaining at the starts of lessons, the pupils are not given sufficient time to learn independently and the pace of learning slows.

An analysis of pupils' books in a range of classes showed that marking is inconsistent. In some years, marking clearly shows pupils what they need to do to progress to the next stage in their learning and pupils are encouraged to enter into a dialogue with their teacher, telling them where they had achieved what their teacher was asking them to do. This best practice was not seen in teachers' marking in all year groups.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour is good. All parents and carers who completed a questionnaire agree with inspection findings that the school keeps pupils safe. This is a result of a high degree of care displayed by all staff for the welfare of the pupils and robust safeguarding procedures and policies. Most pupils are therefore happy in the school and attend well. Good relationships between staff and pupils are a key to this excellent care and, in consequence, even when the pace of learning drops in lessons, behaviour remains good. Pupils said that any isolated incidents of poorer behaviour from more demanding pupils are very well dealt with by staff. Pupils are polite and courteous and show good care for each other's welfare. Older pupils readily take on responsibilities such as being playground pals to younger ones and being reading buddies to listen to them read. Those who attend breakfast club behave well and respond well to the opportunity. The school council is an effective body, raising money for causes in this country and for a school in Ghana. Instances of bullying are

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very rare. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils spoke highly of the effectiveness of education about different forms of bullying they had received, referring to information gained from assemblies, visitors and displays. A Year 5 pupil said: 'This is a friendly school and bullying has no place here.' Most parents and carers agreed that behaviour is good and that the school deals with bullying well and lessons are not disturbed by poor behaviour. Many pupils attend extra-curricular activities, especially the wide range of sporting activities, and pupils said how much they enjoy them. Year 6 pupils were proud of their well-proportioned outside areas, showing off their athletics track and football pitch and saying how much they enjoy sport and playing against other schools. This has helped the school to gain the Activemark.

### **Leadership and management**

Leaders and managers at all levels have worked hard to bring the school successfully through a period of change in leadership. The headteacher provides a clear vision for improvement and, in tandem with the well-led governing body, she has successfully steered the school through recent changes. This has produced improvements in teaching and learning and has maintained rates of progress across the school since the last inspection for all groups of pupils. Equal opportunities are thus strong and the school is characterised by an absence of discrimination against any individuals or groups. Staff and governors are very well trained to respond effectively to any safeguarding issue. In discussions, leaders said that the school is meeting their individual professional development needs well. Self-evaluation is accurate and has resulted in a clear appreciation of the school's areas of strength and the areas where improvements can be made, which is shared by all leaders. As a result, the school has the capacity to improve further. The school links well with partners to give pupils wider opportunities for learning. The parent teacher association raised sufficient funds in a short time to refurbish the school's swimming pool, which is used by all pupils. Collaboration with a range of agencies helps to ensure the good progress of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

The introduction of an improved and more creative curriculum has resulted in improved engagement and enjoyment of their learning by pupils. Year 6 pupils described their best lessons as being 'fun'. They were also very proud of their eco greenhouse, which a previous Year 6 had helped to build. There is an active pupil eco-team who encourage recycling and re-use of materials, which has enabled the school to achieve Eco-School status. Year 6 pupils did express disappointment that they were not able to fully use the nature area and pond for their learning. The inspection agrees that the high quality outdoor environment is not used to its full extent to enable pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. In response to parental requests, a daily breakfast club now caters for up to 12 pupils. Three pupils were observed enjoying breakfast and happily chatting with their two helpers.

Leaders and managers promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural education well. One parent commented that their daughter's spiritual needs were well catered for by the weekly visits to the local church, and the annual carol concert is well attended. The curriculum provides opportunities to study life in other cultures and countries;

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for example, Japanese culture was celebrated through Key Stage 2 pupils contributing individually designed scales to a wall display of a carp. Effective links to schools abroad and visits to local and national events help to further pupils' knowledge of other religions and cultures.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**

27 June 2012

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of St Gregory's Primary School, Sturminster Newton DT10 1PZ**

Thank you all for the polite welcome you gave to me when I visited your school to see how well you were learning. I enjoyed my talks with you in class and around the school.

St Gregory's is a good school. You receive high quality care and support from adults. You said that the school keeps you safe and that it is a school where there is very little bullying. You also said that you are well educated about different types of bullying and that you support each other well. Behaviour is good in the school and you told me that staff deal well with any poorer behaviour. You also told me that your teachers and support staff make learning fun. I found that you learn well because you are well taught at St. Gregory's. You clearly feel happy in school and, as a result, you make good progress and you attend school well. Your school is well led and your headteacher and other leaders are capable of making sure the school improves further. You also told me how you help your school to improve. Older pupils willingly take on a range of responsibilities such as being playground pals and reading buddies to younger pupils. You make positive contributions as school council members, making really good suggestions for improvements and raising money for a range of worthy causes.

I have asked your teachers to enable you to move more quickly on to your activities in class to ensure that you to have more independence in the ways you can choose to learn. I have also asked your teachers to show you clearly how to improve when they mark your work and to allow you to comment on that marking to show them that you have achieved what they were expecting of you. You are especially proud of your outdoor areas and I have asked the school to make even more use of the outside environment to help you to develop your numeracy and literacy skills further.

You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you possibly can and continuing to attend your friendly school regularly. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Garvey  
Lead inspector

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