

St George's Church of England Primary School

Buxton Road, Heaviley, Stockport, SK2 6NX

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear commitment to improvement which is communicated well to staff.
- Pupils in all classes are happy and are cared for. They get on well with staff and each other.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and make good progress.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading and reach standards that are significantly above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and writing and reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Most teaching is good. Teachers make lessons interesting and question pupils well so that their learning is developed.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe and have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in the improved rates of attendance.
- The school has sustained its good performance since the last inspection because leaders and governors take action to maintain pupils' good achievement and promote effective teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not do as well in mathematics and writing as they do in reading.
- The targets set for pupils do not always provide enough challenge.
- Pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because lessons do not always meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher. All teachers and support staff were seen working with the pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read from Years 2 and 6, attended assemblies, and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, local authority reports on the school, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Discussions were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, class teachers, governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Elaine Murray, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Lovell

Additional Inspector

Shelia O'Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- A private before-school and after-school club and a pre-school club, which are not operated by the governing body, run daily.
- There is a new headteacher and deputy headteacher who have been in post since September 2012. The headteacher was previously deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in mathematics and writing by:
 - ensuring that targets set for pupils consistently provide sufficient challenge
 - providing clearer guidance through marking to pupils about their next steps in learning
 - ensuring that lower ability pupils are always appropriately supported in mathematics and with their writing across all year groups.
- Strengthen teaching further, to ensure that it is always good or outstanding, by ensuring that teachers always match activities in lessons precisely to pupils' different abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundations Stage with skills and abilities which are below those expected for their age. Progress in the Reception Year is good. Children learn quickly because they feel happy and secure and are taught well. They get the chance to take part in a good range of stimulating activities across all the areas of learning. This means that children gain the skills they need before they start in Year 1.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading and achieve exceptionally well. This is because their skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) are developed well and systematically in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils read widely and with expression. They are encouraged to read and become confident readers as they move across year groups.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and writing is good, and the proportion of pupils who get the highest results in mathematics has increased since the last inspection.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and writing lags behind that in reading. This is because targets set are not always sufficiently challenging and comments made by teachers in pupils books do not make it clear how they can improve their work.
- Pupils who are less able and those who need more help do not always have the best support and resources to make sure they make the best progress they can.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium do well in writing and mathematics, and extremely well in reading. This is because the pupil premium funding is used well for deploying staff and using targeted interventions.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to other groups of pupils because their particular needs are catered for well. These pupils are well integrated in the life of the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The majority of teaching is well planned and captures and sustains pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are busy in lessons and respond with enthusiasm to a range of practical and interesting activities. For example, in Year 1, pupils made good progress in their understanding of different light sources as they discussed and identified them during a walk around the school hall.
- The best lessons are characterised by:
 - good relationships that help pupils engage well with their learning
 - a purposeful atmosphere and a brisk pace
 - teachers asking probing questions that help pupils to think, to extend their learning and to develop their vocabulary
 - varied teaching strategies which develop and sustain pupils' interest and concentration
 - activities which challenge the more able pupils and meet the needs of those who are less able and require more support.
- Where planning and teaching are at their best, pupils are absorbed by their learning and work well independently. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, careful planning meant that each group of pupils had work which closely matched their ability. As a result, pupils concentrated well and with enthusiasm to develop their understanding of addition using a number line. Pupils were made to think hard by a problem solving activity at the end of the lesson which helped to develop their learning further.
- In the small number of lessons where teaching still requires improvement, work is not matched closely enough to the abilities of the pupils. This means that at times tasks are too difficult for the less-able pupils, or too easy for the more-able pupils. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they could.
- The teaching of reading is particularly good. This happens in phonics lessons which focus on the sounds letters make and in small group work which is closely guided by the teacher. Teachers are

skilfully matching reading work to the need of each pupil. The school has effective ways of ensuring that pupils who need to improve their reading are given support. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels for phonics in the Year 1 assessments was above that of pupils nationally.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils describe the school as, 'A happy place.' They enjoy school, and this is reflected in above-average attendance. Pupils say that they enjoy all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. Staff generally manage pupils' behaviour well. Occasionally there is some lack of attentiveness and concentration where teaching is not fully meeting the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils get on very well with staff and each other and this is a strength of the school. As a result pupils' personal development is strong. In school assemblies pupils learn to reflect and to celebrate their achievements. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' moral and spiritual development, and sense of pride in themselves and their school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage soon settle in to school routines and enjoy their learning. They respond well to staff's clear expectations for their good behaviour.
- Almost all parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agreed that the school keeps their children safe, and most agreed that behaviour is good and that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for in school.
- Instances of all kinds of bullying are uncommon. Pupils are aware that bullying can take different forms. They say that if they have a problem there is always an adult that they can go to, knowing that they will be listened to and their concerns will be acted upon.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders show a real drive and determination to improve the school. The new headteacher, deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher work with energy and commitment and are successful in steering the school in the right direction. They are supported by a committed team of staff and governors who share their sense of purpose.
- A clear system of target setting and review is included in the performance management of staff. Staff have clear targets for development and good opportunities to further their professional knowledge and experience through training. This ensures that the good quality of teaching is sustained. The new headteacher has refined this system to make it more robust, with the aim of raising the quality of teaching further.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have been successful in raising the percentage of pupils gaining the highest results in mathematics at the end of Year 6. Attendance has also risen from broadly average to above average. These improvements demonstrate that the school is well placed to improve further.
- The curriculum is broad and provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to use and develop their reading skills in particular. It is enriched with Spanish and a broad range of extra-curricular activities and school visits.
- There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils do equally well and that none are disadvantaged. The gap between those pupils eligible for the pupil premium and all pupils is closing, particularly with regard to achievement in reading.
- The local authority has provided effective practical support during the recent period of change in senior leadership.
- The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified in the school development plan, which includes raising achievement in mathematics and writing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are committed to seeing the school improve. As a group they have a good understanding of the school's priorities and are confident to support and ask questions which challenge. They are aware of what goes on in school and how well the school is performing. They ensure the school meets its statutory responsibilities. Governors are thoughtful and perceptive in making sure financial resources are used to deliver improving outcomes for pupils. For example, in deciding what to use pupil premium funding for. Governors have played an effective key role in the appointment of new senior staff.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 131306 |
| Local authority | Stockport |
| Inspection number | 403627 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 338 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr J Hardy |
| Headteacher | Mr M Quinn |
| Date of previous school inspection | 31 January 2008 |
| Telephone number | 0161 4808657 |
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