

# St George's Church of England Primary School

Chequers Road, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3QU

**Inspection dates** 17–18 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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, senior leaders and governors have successfully improved the school from its satisfactory position at the previous inspection.
- Achievement is good. The school has worked successfully to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in English and mathematics to catch up in their learning from their starting points when they enter the school.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
- Pupils, staff and parents and carers are proud of their school. Pupils spoke about the friendly, caring atmosphere where they feel safe and secure.
- Pupils behave well, have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school, which is reflected in improved attendance that is now average.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and assistant headteachers inspire and motivate staff.
- Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make, and rapid action is taken if any weaknesses are identified.
- The governing body effectively supports the school and holds it to account for its performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Occasionally work is not well matched to pupils' different abilities, particularly for more-able pupils who sometimes do not have enough time to complete more demanding work.
- Pupils' skills in grammar and spelling and the presentation of their work are not good enough.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to take the initiative and be more independent, resourceful and creative in their learning.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons or part lessons, including some joint observations with the headteacher and a senior manager. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work and listened to some pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, monitoring information and the safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses to the online Parent View survey as well as the school's own survey of parents and carers. They also took account of 12 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Carol Vant

Additional inspector

Veronica Young

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St George's is larger than the average-sized primary school which, in all but name, was established as a new school when it changed from a middle school in 2009.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium), because they are known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average. There are no children who are looked after or children of service families.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes.
- There is a nursery on the school site which is managed by a private provider and therefore not included in this inspection.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club. An after-school club is provided which is not managed by the school.
- The school is still evolving as a two-form intake primary school since it changed from a middle school to a primary school in 2009. It has reached capacity in the Reception classes and Years 1, 2 and 3 and is still building capacity in Years 4, 5 and 6 where there are new arrivals almost on a daily basis. Over one third of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are pupils with disabilities or special educational needs.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to raise achievement further by:
  - improving the quality of pupils' skills in grammar, spelling and presentation while maintaining their enjoyment of writing
  - ensuring work is more precisely matched to pupils' abilities, particularly for more-able pupils, and make sure that they have time to complete demanding work
  - making sure teachers take advantage of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes by giving them more opportunities to work independently, take the initiative and be more resourceful and creative in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because all groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making rapid progress from starting points which are below expectations for their age when they start in the Reception classes and often well below average when they start at the school in other year groups. School data and pupils' work show that pupils are on track to achieve overall average attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Data over the past three years since the school became a primary are not a reliable indicator of the achievement of pupils currently in the school because of the increase of the roll. For example, the number in the Year 6 cohort has increased from 10 in 2010 to 47 in 2012.
- Children get a good start to school in the Reception classes. They make rapid progress and reach the expected goals for their learning by the time they start in Year 1.
- Progress, although good overall, is still a little uneven in Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics, where problem-solving skills have held pupils back in the past, is not yet as strong as it is in English. The school correctly identified this and there are now more opportunities for real-life investigations and problem-solving activities.
- A school focus on improving reading has successfully raised achievement. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. Pupils develop good skills through guided reading sessions where small groups work with adults. Older pupils are able to use skills of inference and deduction to develop deeper levels of understanding and talk with enthusiasm about favourite authors and explain their preferences.
- In the Year 1 phonic screening check in 2012, taken by pupils currently in Year 2, the proportion achieving the expected result was below average. The school responded to this by taking rapid action to group pupils for phonics teaching (the linking of letters and sounds) in Year 2, and more recently in Year 1, to ensure that lessons are pitched at the right level for pupils of different abilities. As a result, most pupils have a secure knowledge of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words.
- The school has worked successfully to provide pupils with lots of meaningful opportunities to write, for example, creating a school newspaper. There are many examples of imaginative, interesting writing and most pupils say they enjoy writing. Pupils' spelling and grammar and the presentation of their work, however, are weaker aspects of writing.
- In the 2012 tests, the attainment of Year 6 pupils who benefited from the pupil premium was almost one year behind other Year 6 pupils in the school in English and eight months behind in mathematics. The gap in English was bigger than that found nationally but the gap in mathematics was smaller. However, in the current Year 6, the gap is narrowing.
- Almost all parents and carers agree that their children make good progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and a notable strength of the school. Teachers engage pupils well with fun and interesting lessons and as a result pupils work hard and want to do well. A group agreed with one pupil who said, 'We get pushed to our limits to expand our knowledge. They encourage us to work our hardest.'
- Most lessons are well planned and so all groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities. This was seen to good effect in mathematics where Year 3 pupils were learning to sort items into a Venn diagram and pupils of all abilities made some outstanding progress.
- In a few lessons, however, more-able pupils have to complete the same work as others before moving on to the more demanding activities and so do not always have time to complete the

higher level work and make the progress of which they are capable. On a very few occasions, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs struggle with work that is too hard for them.

- Lessons usually proceed at a good pace and teachers skilfully build on pupils' earlier learning and, when appropriate, are confident to alter the direction of lessons in order to challenge and correct misconceptions.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and provide good role models for pupils. Teachers are reflective about their effectiveness and consistently strive to provide the best learning experiences for pupils.
- While there is some outstanding teaching, there is not enough that makes the most of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning to provide pupils with more opportunities to take the initiative and be more resourceful, independent and creative in their learning.
- Marking of pupils' work is consistent and informative and pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work and reach their targets. They are given opportunities to reflect on their work and progress and think about how they could be improved.
- Teachers generally make effective use of teaching assistants, who usually have a clear brief for their role in lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. This was an issue for improvement in the previous inspection.
- Children start school life in the Early Years Foundation Stage with positive learning experiences and a broad range of exciting opportunities to play and learn.
- Most parents and carers agree that their children are taught well.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils enjoy coming to school, reflected in their improved attendance, which is now average. Many pupils spoke to inspectors about the friendly and caring atmosphere where they feel safe and secure and can learn and play without fear of discrimination. Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the excellent facilities inside and outside, and consequently the building, equipment and displays are treated with respect.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and exceptionally well around the school, for example in assemblies, and school records show that this is typical of behaviour over time. Occasionally, some pupils become distracted when lessons do not fully engage them or they are struggling with their work. This is why behaviour is not outstanding. Pupils are polite and demonstrate good manners as they move around the school.
- The play therapist makes a significant contribution to pupils' well-being and the play therapy programme has been highly effective in reducing exclusions and incidents of inappropriate behaviour. One pupil commented, 'I get very angry sometimes and it helps me calm down and sort my head out so I get to a better place.'
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers, for example when using computers to access the internet and 'stranger danger'.
- In discussion, pupils say they are not aware of any bullying in school but understand that bullying can take different forms such as name-calling, cyber bullying or prejudiced-based bullying. One pupil relatively new to the school commented on how she was bullied at her previous school and said, 'It's different here, everyone is very friendly and looks after you and I'm a happy little girl now.'
- The breakfast club provides a calm and positive start to the day for those who attend.
- Most parents and carers agree that their children are happy at school, feel safe, are well looked after and behave well. Inspection findings support this view.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher provides highly effective and positive leadership. Parents, carers and staff express great confidence in the leadership and management of the school.
- The headteacher and the assistant headteachers inspire and motivate staff and have built a strong team with a shared drive and ambition for further improvement. There is a culture of support and coaching that has successfully raised achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Key leadership roles are well defined and leaders at all levels, although some are relatively new, make a positive contribution to whole-school improvement as well as providing skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility.
- Pupils' progress is checked frequently and thoroughly and leads to the school's accurate self-evaluation and a clear picture of what the school does well and the priorities for improvement. Rapid and effective action is taken where weaknesses are identified, including additional specialist support.
- Targets are set for teachers that are linked well with the progress pupils make and teachers know they are accountable for pupils' progress and that this is linked to pay and salary progression.
- The school is constantly seeking to ensure that the subjects taught and the extra activities inspire and motivate imaginative and creative learning. In all classes there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Information and communication technology is used well by teachers and pupils for learning across a range of subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well and underpins all that the school does. The school's ethos of care and support, and valuing and including all pupils, demonstrates its commitment to securing equal opportunities for all. There are strong links with the church and other schools.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet statutory requirements and are well known and implemented by all staff to ensure that pupils feel very safe in school.
- An independent adviser supports the school on behalf of the local authority and as the school has improved, now provides just light touch support, mainly in monitoring progress.

**■ The governance of the school:**

The governing body is now established in the school with a new Chair of the Governing Body and a good balance of skills, experience and expertise to hold the school to account for its performance. In response to the previous inspection, training has been undertaken and there is a good understanding of roles and responsibilities. The governing body has a good overview of the quality of teaching and the impact on pupils' learning. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and how it tackles any underperformance. They know the school well, its strengths and areas to improve and how the school's standards compare with those of other schools nationally. Governors have a good knowledge of the use of the additional funding of the pupil premium and agree on how it is spent; for example, to provide play therapy, additional support for individuals and groups, and additional expertise from advisers. They are well informed of the impact of the spending by the headteacher. The governing body meets its statutory requirements, including for safeguarding.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118844
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405819

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Shipley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Howard Fisher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01795 877667
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