

# St George's RC Primary School

Bell's Close, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE15 6XX

**Inspection dates** 30 April–1 May 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.

- Pupils at St George's achieve well. Every Year 6 pupil who left the school last year made at least the progress that is expected and some did better than that.
- Across the school, most pupils do well from their different starting points. Younger pupils get off to a particularly good start.
- Attainment is in line with the national average by the end of Year 6 and it is steadily rising across the school.
- Teaching is good and as a result, pupils learn well. The best lessons have very interesting tasks which are well matched to pupils' different needs. These lessons motivate pupils and promote good progress.
- Pupils get detailed feedback on how to improve their work and reach their targets.
- Pupils are well behaved and try hard with their work
- They feel safe and secure in school because they are very well looked after. They get on well together and are supportive of each other.
- The headteacher leads the school very well and so it is improving quickly.
- Other leaders are playing an increasingly effective role.
- A lot of information is gathered to check how effective the school is, including about teaching and achievement. A wide range of appropriate steps are being taken to improve what is provided for pupils and the effect it is having on their academic and personal development.
- Pupils are thriving in the school's nurturing environment.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good overall, there is some variation in quality.
- Although most pupils make good progress and achieve well overall, there are some gaps in attainment and progress for some individuals and groups.
- The extensive evidence collected by leaders about the school could be analysed in even greater depth to make sure every possible action to improve it is taken.
- The governing body does not ask searching enough questions about the school to check it is effective enough.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 parts of lessons, several of which were conducted jointly with the headteacher. Other visits to classrooms were made while looking at pupils' work and listening to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher and other leaders, members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Insufficient responses were available to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to be able to access them. However the inspector took account of the views of parents who made them known to her, including those spoken with at the start of the school day, and the school's information about parents' views.
- Documents were scrutinised, including information relating to pupils' progress and attendance, performance management, minutes of governing body meetings and monitoring and evaluation records.

## Inspection team

Joan McKenna, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St George's is a much smaller than the average sized primary school. There are very small numbers in some year groups, with some considerable differences in the profile of pupils across year groups.
- The very large majority of pupils are from White British Backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and with special educational needs supported through school action is above average and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.
- More pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual times than is typical.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which sets out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- There is a before and after school club on site which is not managed by the governing body and which did not form part of this inspection.

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

- Improve all teaching to the quality of the best in order to accelerate pupils' progress further still by:
  - ensuring that teachers use the data that is available about pupils' achievement fully when planning and teaching to take specific actions to close any gaps that exist between individuals or groups and other pupils
  - ensuring that teachers check pupils' understanding thoroughly throughout lessons and adapt their teaching to correct any misunderstandings and to reinforce their learning
  - ensuring that all lessons are taught in a stimulating way which captures pupils' interest.
- Ensure that all of the evidence that leaders collect about how well the school is doing is analysed fully to identify all possible steps that can be taken to improve it further.
- Ensure that the governing body asks more searching questions of the school to check on its effectiveness.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- There are very small numbers of pupils in most year groups and so caution needs to be exercised in interpreting statistics about achievement. For example, individual children's attainment on entry to the school varies considerably but it tends to be below expectations overall. However, it is above expectations for some pupils.
- Pupils' attainment is rising across the school. It is broadly in line with the national averages, and it has steadily increased at the ends of all key stages. Where there is an occasional dip, it is related to the pupils' lower starting points.
- Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. They get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they make particularly fast gains in their personal development and learning. There are also strengths in Years 1 and 2. Every single pupil who left Year 6 in 2012 for whom there was data available made at least expected progress during Key Stage 2. Some did better than expected, especially in writing.
- While pupils achieve well overall, there are some differences between individuals and groups. These can sometimes appear to be more significant than they are because of the very small numbers involved.
- Nevertheless, pupils who are at the school for the whole of their schooling or for the whole of a key stage make more progress than those who join at other times.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress well because they are well known as individuals and they receive carefully targeted and personalised support. However a few do less well because of the nature of their particular needs.
- The attainment of the very small number of pupils who were eligible for pupil premium funding in last year's Year 6 lagged behind that of pupils not eligible for such funding, despite their good progress. Points scored in tests showed that they were over five terms behind others in English and over three terms behind in mathematics. However these gaps were smaller than in the previous year, and they are narrowing further for pupils currently in Year 6, because the funding is being used effectively to provide support for them.
- The good progress overall and the fact that gaps that exist between groups are narrowing shows that the school is promoting equal opportunities well.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The effect of the good teaching is seen in the fact that pupils are progressing well over time and that attainment is rising.
- A common feature in all lessons is the warm, supportive relationships that adults have with pupils, which build their confidence and makes them want to learn.
- In the most effective lessons, pupils are given interesting and stimulating tasks which capture their imaginations and create an excitement about learning. The tasks are broken down into small steps which build on each other so pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed in a progressive manner.
- Pupils are taught basic skills of literacy and numeracy well and increasingly so as they are given opportunities to apply them in a range of subjects. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children were seen applying their knowledge of the sounds that letters that they had learnt in the mornings in their writing in the afternoon. In the same class, children were keeping basketball scores which was giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and sequencing of numbers up to 20 in a relevant and fun context.
- In most lessons, attention is paid to meeting the needs of different ability groups which promotes effective learning for all. However, the data that is available is not always used in full to provide additional personalised support or challenge in lessons in order to further accelerate the progress of individuals for whom gaps with others need to be closed.

- Occasionally, teaching is less effective when tasks or explanations are not made interesting, when pupils' understanding is not checked thoroughly enough or when key points about learning are not reinforced well. This is more common in Key Stage 2.
- The feedback given to pupils on how well they are doing and how to do better and reach their targets is thorough, especially in English. The 'assertive mentoring', introduced to provide a regular, detailed discussion between each pupil and their assigned mentor is a strong feature. Some pupils talked animatedly about this process and had a real sense of ownership of their files which relevant information and written guidance was kept in.

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

- Pupils are extremely friendly, welcoming and open. They have very positive relationships with each other. They respect each other, the school and are proud to be pupils at St George's.
- They are very well known as individuals and receive high quality care and support. As a result, they develop good levels of confidence and feel safe and secure. They also care for each other, as demonstrated by the playground monitors who look after younger pupils at break times and lunchtimes.
- Some pupils take on other formal responsibilities by being school councillors, house captains and through a variety of monitor roles. Almost all take responsibility for their own conduct and for being model pupils.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and try hard at all times to do as they are asked. A few have difficulties in meeting the school's expectations of their conduct, but there are appropriate mechanisms for dealing with these incidences when they occur.
- Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying. Most pupils are kind to each other. Occasional incidents of bullying do occur, but they are well dealt with.
- Most pupils attend regularly, but overall attendance is below the national figures. This is due mainly to the impact of a very small number of pupils who miss school for medical reasons.
- Parents sing the praises of the school, and are especially positive about the way it cares for their children.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher leads the school effectively, with determination, commitment and a clear-sighted and ambitious vision for pupils. This has been well communicated and there is a strong sense of a team working towards shared aims.
- Other leaders' skills are being systematically developed, and they play an increasingly role in improving the school. They undertake a range of valuable activities, but their analysis of data to check on effectiveness is at earlier stages of development.
- The policies and procedures necessary to ensure that school runs efficiently and effectively are in place. There is extensive checking of how well the school is doing and pupils' attainment and progress is checked and analysed regularly.
- Appropriate and well-targeted action is taken in response to the information gathered. Steps to improve teaching, including through the management of teachers' performance, are thorough. However, although the information collected is analysed well overall, it is not analysed as rigorously as it could be to identify all possible issues and trends and hence to set even sharper targets for improvement.
- Changes have been made to the curriculum to make it more stimulating and relevant, through, for example, creating more links between subjects and having more visits for pupils. Promoting basic skills is a central feature of it. A wide range of enrichment activities, including extracurricular clubs, exist and are popular.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in a wide variety of ways. This leads to rich and rewarding experiences for pupils which promotes their personal development well.

- Keeping pupils safe has a high priority. Arrangements to do so are thorough and meet requirements.
- Parents are positive about the school, including about the improvements they see being made.
- The local authority, including through its provision of a school improvement partner, has provided valued support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is supportive of the school and is becoming better informed about its work through reports to it and visits to the school. They have some awareness of the quality of teaching and how it is rewarded through pay progression, pupils' achievement and how pupil premium funding is allocated. However, although questions are asked to check on the school's effectiveness, these are not as extensive or searching as they need to be.

## 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>	108499
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle Upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	405175

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>	90
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Archibald
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennifer Gill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 267 5677
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