

St George Church of England Primary School

Queen's Parade, Brandon Hill, Bristol, BS1 5XJ

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is below average. This has been the case for several years.
- Pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in all classes. They do not make enough progress in mathematics to reach higher standards by the end of Year 6.
- Not enough teaching inspires pupils to think more deeply. Teachers do not introduce new vocabulary with enough determination.
- Numeracy teaching does not ensure pupils use a range of strategies to solve mathematical problems.
- The pupils entitled to the government's extra funding have not benefited as much as they might have done. This is because checks have not been made to see if this group of pupils are gaining from the extra support.
- Attendance rates are still too low.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders are unwavering in their efforts to improve standards, tackle weak teaching and improve pupils' attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' reading and writing have improved rapidly.
- Pupils feel safe, enjoy learning and are motivated to do their best.
- The local authority provides regular and good quality support to the governors to ensure they carry out their responsibilities to improve the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, two small group teaching sessions and visited the Early Years Foundation Stage twice to watch children's learning. The headteacher accompanied the inspector for five of the lesson observations.
- The inspector joined the school assembly, met with pupils informally over lunch and formally to hear them read and share their favourite pieces of work. He also looked at a range of pupils' work books, including the mathematics books of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the inclusion leader, seven governors and the local authority's school improvement officer.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents including information on pupils' progress, policies, lesson planning and school improvement plans and reviews.
- The inspector paid close attention to information on school attendance, all aspects of safeguarding and the plans for spending the extra government funding.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the 14 responses to the on-line Parent View questionnaire. Eight responses to the staff questionnaire were taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a small primary school. There is one class for Nursery and Reception-aged children and three mixed age classes for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is well above average and a few of these are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the school for moderate learning difficulties, speech and language delay and emotional and social needs is average.
- There are very few pupils receiving specialist help from outside agencies or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional government funding, which is known as the pupil premium, is well above average. Around half the pupils in the school are eligible for this funding.
- The school met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Two full time teachers and two non-teaching members of staff and the school administrator were on long term leave. One class was taught by two part-time teachers. A temporary teacher is covering the role of inclusion leader. One teacher joined the school at the start of the academic year as the leader for mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, so that all pupils make good or better progress by:
 - ensuring that all lessons move at a brisk pace
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons, especially in mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use the correct vocabulary in writing and mathematics lessons
 - providing more emphasis on the vocabulary pupils need to help them to explain their ideas effectively
 - using discussion time to challenge and extend pupils' thinking
 - increasing the amount of work pupils do in mathematics by ensuring they learn how to calculate and solve problems.
- Increase the rate of progress made by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals by focusing on this group when carrying out pupil progress reviews and adjusting lesson planning to meet their learning needs.
- Improve attendance by re-instating the support for those families whose children are more frequently absent than others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Many children come into the Nursery class at a stage of development that is below the level normally expected for their age. In Nursery and Reception Years children make good progress as a result of well-planned activities. Currently they are ready to start Year 1 with skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected.
- For several years, pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 has been below average with the result that, by the end of Year 2, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been below where it should be given their starting points at the beginning of Year 1.
- Attainment in early reading and writing is improving because the good practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage is being continued into Years 1 and 2. More attention is being given to the teaching of letters and sounds. However, this was not soon enough to ensure that Year 1 pupils met the expectations of the letters and sounds national screening check. Pupils read and recognise words by using the links between letters and sounds confidently.
- The recent support for lesson planning in Key Stage 1 is helping to accelerate progress, but pupils are still not well prepared for their move into Year 3. For example, they do not always understand how to calculate using numbers greater than 20 and lack confidence in applying basic number skills. However, early writing has been given a much greater focus with topics that stimulate pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are writing more and with less help required from their teachers.
- Over several years, standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics have been lower than they should be, most notably those of pupils entitled to free school meals. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics currently has speeded up, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is good.
- Pupils' writing is well punctuated and presented. Pupils respond well to the structured approach offered through a book-based approach to teaching writing and through regularly working in small teams called trios. Their writing is interesting and fluent. They read well, and show an interest in a wide range of authors and types of book.
- Not enough of the teaching has been good enough in the past, and currently, to challenge more able pupils to reach higher levels in mathematics. Pupils are getting better at basic calculations and are learning to use mental arithmetic to solve problems quickly.
- Pupils' progress is regularly checked and the findings used to provide extra help for those who are still lagging behind pupils of the same age. With the help of the inclusion leader, teachers check on progress being made by those recently arrived in school, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. There is a wide range of interventions used to help these pupils with learning.
- Pupils who receive additional government funding are progressing at the same level as those of a similar age. Although previously the difference between their results in tests was much lower than their peers, the gap has narrowed during this academic year. This is because the additional funding pays for additional adults who provide support to small groups and individuals. Teachers are not checking the information on pupils' progress to ensure that this group are benefitting from the additional funds.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Not enough teaching is good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress in lessons, despite improvements in some important aspects of teaching since the last inspection. Not all lessons provided pupils with enough guidance on what was expected of them and this meant the pupils did not achieve as well as they should.
- Teachers do not always ask questions to get pupils to think more deeply. The responses during discussion times do not probe enough, or open up thinking and get pupils to share their ideas

with the teacher and the class. However, teachers plan interesting lessons and this means pupils are quickly drawn into learning. There is generally a good match of the work to the ability of pupils, although this sometimes stalls when teachers fail to ask the questions that get pupils thinking more deeply.

- The information gained from looking at pupils' work and regular tests help teachers plan work with reasonable accuracy. Teaching assistants offer good support both in lessons and when taking small groups to reach the goals the teachers have set for pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils work thoroughly. They help pupils understand what they have learnt, and offer suggestions as to how work could be improved. When they think that pupils could have done better, teachers ask them to go back over their mistakes and make improvements.
- Vocabulary being used in the lesson or introduced for the first time is not given enough attention. In both English and mathematics lessons there was imprecise use of technical vocabulary. Those who are learning English as an additional language get the help they need in lessons from additional adults to catch up with their peers.
- Teachers are mapping out precisely how disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are being taught. Teaching assistants are well trained to teach specific programmes or help those with sensory difficulties. Teachers and assistants work closely to ensure that the teaching for these pupils is consistent in quality.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage team uses its excellent knowledge and understanding of how young children learn to make sure activities are meaningful but fun. Teaching is effective in helping children to play, explore and be active in communicating and thinking. The regular checks on their development are perceptive and contribute to parents' observations of how well the children are doing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are typically polite and well behaved in class and around the school. They cooperate well with staff and work sensibly in pairs and groups. This was shown in a Years 3 and 4 lesson where pupils of different abilities, in groups of three, helped each other to produce evocative sentences, using adjectival clauses and similes. The attention they gave to helping each other spell accurately or correct their work made a good contribution to their successful learning.
- Pupils know how well they are doing and are ambitious for themselves. They understand their targets and have a genuine desire to get better at all the subjects they are taught. They want to learn and listen well to their teachers.
- Pupils take on responsibilities. Younger children enjoy having older ones as book buddies. They look out for each other at playtimes, help with school rules and have created posters to explain to each other how to stay safe on the internet and social media.
- Pupils are well aware of different forms of bullying. They say there is very little bullying and this is confirmed by parents. They say they feel safe and staff deal promptly with any worries or concerns.
- Respect and tolerance toward each other are evident in the way that pupils assimilate quickly new arrivals into the school. They respect each other's differences, and are encouraged to do so by the inclusive attitudes of all the staff working in the school. Their respect for others does not extend to lunchtimes, when they are too noisy in the dining hall.
- Attendance remains low. A few families who take their children abroad to see relatives lower the overall attendance rate. The school has taken legal action with families who do not make the effort to ensure their children attend regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has been successful in improving the school. She is decisive and has high expectations of staff, challenging any complacency in their teaching. Her extensive experience in

leading others to improve standards of literacy has been used well to turn around pupils' low achievement in writing.

- Leaders are helping individual staff to improve weaker aspects of their skills. They routinely help colleagues with planning and check that their advice is being followed up in lessons. In a short time the teaching of mathematics has been improved and is now on a secure footing.
- The selection of topics to study and the choice of reading books encourage a positive attitude towards different cultures. The spiritual development of pupils is given priority during worship, with the inclusion of prayers selected by the pupils.
- Good use is made of pupil progress tracking to ensure every pupil has equal opportunity to succeed. The headteacher has encouraged staff to ensure pupils understand what and why they are learning new skills. This is also contributing to some faster rates of progress.
- The headteacher has introduced tighter systems to check on the performance of each teacher. By working closely with individual teachers, the headteacher supports and guides them to develop their teaching and leadership skills. Individual staff development plans are closely linked to annual performance reviews. This links directly to school priorities and staff salaries.
- School development plans are kept under regular review. Good staff training and opportunities to share best practice, for example through sharing work book reviews and observing each other's work, have strengthened teaching.
- The headteacher has worked hard to cover the numerous staff absences, without disrupting the daily management of the school. She has looked to another school to provide help in mapping out the extra support that is required for those with special educational needs.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements. The school follows procedures carefully and works closely with agencies in the city to ensure pupils are well cared for.
- The local authority has a detailed knowledge of the school's shortcomings. A regular programme of visits and checks, combined with financial help, ensures that difficulties with staffing have not derailed the progress towards raising standards. The local authority has also funded the training of school leaders so they can carry out their roles effectively. The local authority governors' development services have given practical guidance and help to governors in monitoring the school's effectiveness. For example, they have tutored governors in how to carry out checks to find out if the planned developments are helping pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are now working closely with the school. Since the last inspection they have sharpened their focus on driving up pupil achievement. They gain plenty of first-hand experience of the day-to-day life of the school, for example by joining assemblies and lessons, hearing pupils read and accompanying classes on visits. Governing body reports and their notes of visits to the school reflect a robust challenge through the questions they ask of school leaders. The answers provoke other lines of enquiry but there is no link between what they have discovered and school improvement planning. The governors have a good knowledge of how the progress tracking data compare to national expectations and check that targets for performance of staff are reviewed carefully and linked to how well pupils are doing. They have had good help with managing the financial resources, but have not drilled down into the way the pupil premium is spent to help these pupils with their learning. They are in a strong position now to determine their own training and development plans to ensure that the rapid progress they have made so far is not squandered.

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

Unique reference number	109145
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	423588

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Taylor
Headteacher	Shireen Hayes
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2012
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