

# St George's Foundation Primary School

Clarence Road, Portland, Dorset, DT5 2BD

**Inspection dates** 8–9 January 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 is lower than expected given their starting points. This is because not all teachers have high enough expectations, and teaching is not consistently good across some classes.
- More able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because in some classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- Leaders and managers have not fully checked the quality of teaching and challenged teachers to do better.
- Action to increase the involvement of governors in checking the achievement of pupils has not been in place long enough to enable them to ask demanding questions and hold the school fully to account.
- The role of subject leaders in improving teaching is hindered because they do not have a secure understanding of achievement in their subjects compared to that seen in other schools nationally.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 has risen in the past year and is now similar to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school because they have friends, are well cared for and know they are safe.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment which provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons or parts of lessons, 14 of them joint observations with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- They scrutinised pupils' work in their books. In addition, they spoke to a range of pupils about their learning and other aspects of school life and also listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and Year 6 read.
- The inspectors held meetings with members of the school's leadership team, as well as representatives from the governing body. They also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, records of the quality of teaching, a range of policies, including those relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, information about pupils' progress, and records of behaviour incidents. They also looked at the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of 36 responses to the online Parent View survey, the views expressed by parents spoken to on the playground, and two other communications received from parents. Inspectors also took account of the views of 42 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Rushforth

Additional Inspector

Jacqui Good

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than average when compared to all primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for pupils entitled to free school meals, those in care, and those whose parents are in the armed forces) is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a disability or special educational needs supported at school action is similar to the national average, whilst the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher. The school has a higher than average turnover of pupils.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher was appointed on a permanent basis in February 2013, having been acting headteacher since September 2012.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to consistently good or better, particularly in Years 3 and 4, so that pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is raised, by:
  - ensuring teachers plan work for their pupils which builds upon what they already know, and which gives pupils enough challenge to improve
  - raising expectations of the quantity and quality of work pupils should do within lessons
  - ensuring that oral feedback and marking of pupils' work are accurate, and that pupils are given time to respond
  - using the skills of outstanding teachers within the school, and those of external leading teachers, to coach and mentor weaker teachers within the school
  - senior leaders more regularly checking the work of teachers identified as less effective.
- Strengthen leadership and management so that the necessary improvements are made quickly by:
  - ensuring subject leaders are given appropriate training and time so that they can be more effective in improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils
  - making better use of pupils' assessment information so that leaders and managers at all levels have a secure understanding of achievement compared to that seen in schools nationally, and to raise teachers' expectations of the standards their pupils should reach and the progress they should make
  - providing governors with in-depth analyses of the progress of each group of pupils compared to national expectations, so that they can challenge school leaders about the impact of provision, particularly the quality of teaching, upon pupils' progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement, because over time they have not made enough progress during Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Although standards rose slightly in 2013 and are similar to national standards at the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils making the progress of which they should be capable given their starting points is well below the national average. Despite improved progress in Years 5 and 6, there is too much ground to be made up.
- Pupils achieved well above the national average in the Year 6 spelling, grammar and punctuation tests in 2013.
- The achievement of groups of pupils within the school, including those entitled to the pupil premium, and those with disabilities or special educational needs, is similar in that it requires improvement.
- The gap in achievement between those entitled to pupil premium support and other pupils, which was around five terms' progress in mathematics and writing, and three terms' in reading in Year 6 in 2012, has been eradicated. Within each year group, the progress of different groups of pupils is now similar.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows variation in the quality of presentation, reflecting low expectations of some teachers particularly in Years 3 and 4. In many books, particularly in Year 3, the quantity of work expected of pupils is too low and some pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise skills and consolidate their learning.
- The progress of most pupils, including pupils supported by the pupil premium and those with disabilities or special educational needs, has been more rapid in the past four terms. This is because strategies implemented by the headteacher and deputy headteacher to improve the quality of teaching have begun to be effective, and are evidence of the school's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development below those expected for their age, and many well below. They progress well because teachers and teaching assistants provide enjoyable and appropriate activities, and keep a close eye on each child's needs. However, overall they enter Year 1 with levels of development lower than expected in communication, language and literacy, and in personal, social and emotional skills.
- During Key Stage 1, most pupils make good progress because teaching is good and pupils respond positively to the interesting activities they are given. Their attainment is close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 meeting the expected standard in the government's phonics (letters and the sounds they make) check is similar to that found nationally.
- A focus on reading, including reading at home, is ensuring that pupils read frequently and widely, which is helping to improve their ability.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- There has not been enough good and outstanding teaching over time in Key Stage 2 to result in good achievement for all pupils by the end of Year 6.
- Low expectations from some teachers in Years 3 and 4 of the quality and quantity of work to be produced by pupils have resulted in many not making enough progress.
- The quality of marking in pupils' books is not consistent in some classes and does not always reflect the school's policy. While some good quality marking and feedback was seen, in some cases marking was inaccurate, and teachers' comments do not always help pupils to improve their work. Pupils are not always given sufficient time to respond to marking.
- There is much good and some outstanding teaching within the school and some teaching has

improved over the past year due to effective support from the headteacher.

- Where teaching is less effective, planned activities do not build upon what the pupils already know and can do, so some pupils are given work that is too easy, and others work that is too hard, resulting in confusion.
- The recent introduction of 'choice and challenge' in lessons, where pupils are encouraged to select from bronze, silver or gold activities, is successful in many classes where they are motivated by the activities and keen to challenge themselves.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Relationships in lessons are good, with pupils and staff cooperating and working well together.
- Almost all the parents who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website, as well as those spoken to on the playground, believe their children are taught well.

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

- Safeguarding and the safety of pupils are good because they are given high profile in the school. Risk assessments are robust, and regular training for staff and governors, and careful monitoring of the school site, help to ensure the pupils' safety.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because bullying is rare and is dealt with promptly. They have a good understanding, appropriate to their age, of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Pupils' behaviour is also good. They are polite and respectful to each other and to staff. They enjoy school and like their teachers and teaching assistants.
- Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons, and the skilful behaviour management of a few very challenging pupils helps them to remain in class and learn.
- Parents spoken to were particularly impressed with the positive relationships between themselves, the staff and the children. As one said, 'Even though it is a big school, it feels like a small school.'
- Attendance has improved due to steps taken by the school, which include prompt telephoning of parents, awards for good attendance, involvement of external agencies such as the educational welfare officer, attendance panels held in school led by the headteacher, and support for vulnerable families. Attendance is now average.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching is not yet consistently good enough to result in good achievement by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Since her appointment, and supported by the acting deputy headteacher, the headteacher has identified areas of weak teaching, and has implemented training programmes. As a result, the teaching of phonics has improved, and attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved slightly.
- A robust performance management system was implemented in September 2013 with detailed pupil progress targets for all pupils. However, some weak teaching remains in Years 3 and 4, which is continuing to affect progress adversely.
- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher gather extensive information about pupils' progress but have not yet fully used this to make comparisons with the progress of all pupils nationally.
- The roles of other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, are effective in ensuring good provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility.
- Subject leaders are less effective because their roles are relatively new, and they have not yet developed a full understanding of pupils' achievement or the effectiveness of teaching across the

school in literacy and numeracy. Consequently they are not yet fully equipped to help improve teaching.

- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. For example, pupils learn about other cultures and support a school in Kenya. They participate in a wide range of musical, artistic and sporting events within school and beyond, and they enjoy a number of visits and visitors each year. The number and range of extra-curricular clubs offered to pupils is extensive.
- Partnerships with other providers, for example the Chesil Education Partnership, nearby pre-schools and secondary schools, are good and enables smooth transitions for pupils. Links with external agencies, such as the educational psychologist and the education welfare officer, help the school to take care of vulnerable pupils.
- All the staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire believe the school is well led and managed, as do the majority of parents who responded to Parent View and all those spoken to in the playground. The contrasting views of some parents who contacted the inspection team separately were carefully considered, but their views were found not to be typical of the parent body as a whole.
- Physical education is a strength of the school, and the new funding provided by the government specifically for this has been used to improve staff skills, broaden the range of activities on offer and provide specialist coaching. It is too early in the school year to gauge the impact of this funding.
- The improvements made in the quality of teaching over the past year, and in attainment in phonics and in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, confirm that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- The local authority has provided light touch support for the school by termly visits and guidance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are knowledgeable and undertake training when possible to help them to carry out their role. They are well organised and have regular meetings to discuss all aspects of the school, and are informed about teachers' performance management and salary progression. Governors have a good understanding of the use of the pupil premium funding and know that it improved achievement for eligible pupils this year. They receive information from senior leaders about the achievement of pupils, but this information has not been provided in a way that enables them to compare the school's performance with that of similar schools nationally and so they have not been able to ask challenging questions. They meet their safeguarding responsibilities, and manage the school's finances carefully.

## 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>	127133
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	431848

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	439
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Crabb
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Luxon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01305 820520
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