

St Georges VA Church Primary School

Pastures Avenue, St Georges, Weston-super-Mare, BS22 7SA

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		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 in Key Stage 2 fell between 2011 and 2012. While it improved slightly in 2013, pupils do not make good progress in Key Stage 2.
- Across Key Stage 2 pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding have made considerably less progress in reading, writing and mathematics than those who are not eligible.
- The quality of teaching over time has not been good enough. When teaching is less effective pupils do not make good progress because they spend too much time practising work that they have already learned.
- Marking does not consistently help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Leaders have not made sure pupil premium funds have been used effectively to reduce the achievement gap between eligible pupils and others. In Key Stage 2 the gap has been getting larger.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have rightly identified the need to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement across Key Stage 2. The changes they have put in place have yet to show sustained improvement.

The school has the following strengths:

- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong and, combined with good teaching, ensures that children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1, where teaching is consistently strong. Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding often reach standards which are higher than of those who are not eligible.
- The school's caring ethos ensures all pupils feel, and are, safe.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted to high levels and results in pupils' good behaviour in lessons and around the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in each class where they looked at pupils’ work across the school year and observed teaching. Three of the 14 lessons were observed jointly with a senior leader.
- Meetings were held with governors, members of staff, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils, including the eco-club. Inspectors also heard a group of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses of parents and carers to the online Parent View questionnaire along with those from 32 staff questionnaires. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents and carers in the morning when they were bringing their children to school.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s information on pupils’ progress, records of the headteacher’s monitoring of the work across the school and documents relating to safeguarding. They also considered information published on the school’s website.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school’s view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Michael Smith, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Elizabeth Strange

Additional Inspector

Simon Kingwell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school, with a nursery for 52 children.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those from armed forces families) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has provided support to another local school in her role as a Local Leader of Education.
- At the start of the school year in September 2013, the allocation of staff to teach particular years was changed. A member of staff was promoted to deputy headteacher to replace a colleague who left to be a headteacher of another school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that pupils' make good progress in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that:
 - the features of good and outstanding practice within the school are shared effectively to bring about improvements to the overall quality of teaching
 - teachers identify when pupils have mastered the skill they are working on so they can have more challenging work to extend their learning and achievement over time
 - lessons consistently challenge and engage all pupils
 - marking helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium in Key Stage 2 by ensuring:
 - leaders and managers consistently use the funds effectively to reduce the achievement gap between those who are eligible and those who are not
 - governors monitor the use of funds and assess the impact of their use in reducing the achievement gap.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because in Key Stage 2 it has been below expectation over the last two years. Pupils fail to build upon their good start in Key Stage 1, where standards are above average, so that they do not make good progress across the key stage.
- In 2013 the proportions of pupils who reached the expected level in their Key Stage 2 tests were above average in mathematics and reading, but the proportions gaining the next level were below average.
- While the proportions of pupils who make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with or above those seen nationally, the proportions who make better than expected progress are lower than national figures.
- The school's records and work in pupils' books show that progress across Key Stage 2 is improving. In particular those in the older years are starting to make up for previous weak performance.
- Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding made significantly less progress than other groups of pupils across Key Stage 2 last year. On average, eligible pupils made two terms less progress than their counterparts in reading and mathematics and around a term for writing. These gaps are far larger than those seen nationally. From January the school has employed an additional teacher to work with pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, to support them in making better progress. It is too early to see the full impact of this support, but initial indications are promising.
- In the 2013 national tests, none of the most able pupils were entered for the Level 6 Key Stage 2 tests. Consequently the most able were not able to demonstrate their full potential given their earlier starting points. The school has rightly recognised the need to ensure the most able are suitably challenged and has identified pupils who will enter the Level 6 tests this year and is providing additional support for them.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. Children make good progress in their Reception and Nursery Years and enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge above average, particularly in their writing, reading and work with counting and number.
- Assessments at the end Key Stage 1 show that attainment for reading, writing and mathematics has been above average over the last three years, although it fell slightly in 2013. These checks indicate that pupils who are eligible for pupil premium often achieve higher than those who are not. Pupils are confident readers and results for the Year 1 reading checks show that the pupils attain results far higher than the national average.
- There are a small number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in each year group who generally achieve in line with their peers, and so their achievement also requires improvement. Some make better progress given the effective support they receive. One parent or carer was particularly keen to let inspectors know how well she thought her child had been supported with his specific learning need and how he was making good progress with his reading and writing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, while it has improved, it is not consistently good enough to make up for previous weak teaching in Key Stage 2.
- At Key Stage 2 in particular, teaching does not always fully engage and challenge pupils. It does not always identify when pupils have mastered the skill or task they are working on. The most able pupils' learning is limited because they cover skills they have already mastered.
- Teachers' marking is too variable in quality. When marking is at its most effective pupils demonstrate how they have consolidated or extended their learning in response to the teacher's

comments. However, in some classes this high standard of marking is not evident because it only occasionally gives advice on how they could improve their work.

- There is much good practice within the school, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Here pupils are fully engaged, challenged and make good progress. Work is stimulating, especially when the work is linked to the topics each year group are studying.
- In all classrooms good display enhances the work covered in lessons as well as supporting pupils to identify how they can overcome problems if they get stuck.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Staff are prepared to make that extra effort to support the pupils, for example, staff wore excellent Second World War costumes as they were travelling with pupils to visit the Steam Centre in Swindon.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. Children learn through a variety of interesting and challenging sessions which are well led by either a teacher or a teaching assistant. Children really enjoy choosing for themselves which activities they will follow. Assessments are continually made and build a very informative overview of how children are progressing. Good use is made of the outdoor area to enhance children's learning and development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils know how to behave well and take pride in their work. While there occasional lapses for some pupils they are rare and do not adversely affect the progress made by others.
- Behaviour around school and during breaks and lunchtimes is good. A few parents or carers expressed concern about behaviour when responding to the online survey, Parent View. However, pupils said they felt behaviour was good and they had no real concerns.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who spoke to an inspector were very pleased with the work the school was doing and the behaviour of pupils. They particularly liked how easy it was to discuss any problems with staff when they brought their children to school each morning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This is confirmed by virtually all parents and carers who responded to Parent View and also by parents and carers who spoke to an inspector. Staff are particularly successful in supporting pupils who are potentially very vulnerable.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the key issues of keeping safe when using computers. This includes when using games machines which also link to the internet and the use of mobile phones. The school provides helpful advice for parents and carers on the use of computers at home, for example, placing the computer in a communal room.
- The school ensures pupils understand the risks which are appropriate for their age, for example 'stranger danger' awareness. Assemblies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons are adapted to take account of emerging issues.
- Pupils say bullying incidents are rare and when they do occur they are often around falling out with friends or how a pupil looks, including hurtful comments about their backgrounds. A small number of parents and carers expressed concern regarding bullying when responding to Parent View. Records show that the school investigates all incidents and tries to help pupils who have fallen out to become friends again. This is not always reported to parents and carers, consequently there are times when parents and carers are not fully aware of what has happened.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The recent changes in staffing and in the leadership of key areas mean that many procedures are relatively new and they have not had time to take full effect. While there have been recent

improvements in the quality of teaching, as yet not all pupils make good progress.

- Pupil premium funds have not been used effectively to reduce the gap in achievement between eligible pupils and other pupils. The employment of a teacher from January 2014 to provide support for pupils by teaching them in small groups, along with additional computers to enable pupils to complete online mathematics support, is starting to bring about improvements.
- Additional sports funding is helping provide greater sporting opportunities for pupils, for example football, netball and tag rugby. Extra training is helping teachers to become more confident to teach gymnastics. Pupils have improved their gymnastic skills as a result. Other funds have been used to refurbish the pirate ship so that pupils use it to increase their physical activity levels.
- The role of middle leaders (those responsible for aspects of the school or age groups) in leading improvement is limited at present. Most areas are led by senior leaders, as the expertise of other staff is being developed so that they may be able to take over responsibilities once they are suitably experienced.
- The school's self-evaluation is overgenerous and does not give sufficient emphasis to how well pupils are progressing, or how well the school is closing the attainment gap for pupils eligible for the pupil premium. The school's improvement plan identifies key areas which the school needs to improve and rightly recognises the potential and ambition for improvement.
- The local authority supports the leadership of the school through visits from a school improvement partner who has confirmed the schools' concerns regarding weaker achievement in Key Stage 2 and the lack of impact of pupil premium funds. The local authority has provided well received support for the governing body through frequent training opportunities, but as yet this training has not ensured improvements in key areas within the school.
- Staff feel very well supported by the senior leaders and share the school's ambition. All staff who answered the questionnaire said the school was well led and that they were proud to work at the school.
- Senior leaders are starting to remedy weaker teaching and bring about improvements to the quality of teaching. Observations are used to ensure that only staff who meet the stringent requirements are suitably rewarded by increased pay.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills across different topics. Pupils also enjoy a wide variety of additional trips and visits. The strong moral and spiritual awareness in the school leads to outstanding developments in those areas, along with good cultural and social development. Inspectors observed that pupils were very keen to take part in the relaunch of the eco-club.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved as a result of additional training and governors are now in a better position to challenge the school and then bring about improvements. A governor has recently been appointed to oversee the work of the school supporting those eligible for pupil premium funding. However, governors do not yet have a good understanding of the impact of the use of pupil premium funds. Governors have an effective overview of the quality of teaching and of procedures to ensure only staff who are consistently good teachers are rewarded or that staff are set suitably challenging targets based upon raising achievement. They also know when staff have to be challenged about their performance. Governors now have improved skills to analyse how the school's results compare to those of others to challenge senior leaders in helping its effectiveness return to the good levels noted in the last report. Governors have good systems to check that safeguarding systems are as good as possible and fully meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

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	134830
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	441094

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Lynch
Headteacher	Sandra Medley
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2011
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