

St George's, Bickley, Church of England Primary School

Tylney Road, Bromley, BR1 2RL

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Senior leaders, together with the governors, have raised pupils' achievement significantly since the previous inspection.
- In 2014, attainment in reading and mathematics in Year 6 was exceptionally high, with some pupils reaching levels typically achieved in secondary schools.
- Rigorous checking by senior leaders and opportunities for teachers to observe strong practice in other schools and to participate in training have raised the quality of teaching, and it is now good.
- Pupils' progress is good. All groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language, achieve well.
- Good provision for children in the early years ensures that they have a secure foundation for their work in Year 1.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and that all adults will help them if they are worried. They behave well and demonstrate good attitudes towards learning.
- All staff share the ambition of senior leaders for pupils to achieve highly. Subject leaders are developing their skills well and make an important contribution to raising achievement.
- Information from assessments of pupils' progress is used effectively to identify pupils who may be at risk of falling behind. Additional funds are directed to help disadvantaged pupils to overcome barriers to their learning and enhance their progress.
- Governors use their expertise well to challenge and support staff in their determination to raise achievement. They ensure that the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the work of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils in the early years and Key Stage 1 are not always challenged well enough.
- Attainment in writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics, in part because the activities pupils are asked to carry out do not engage their interest fully.
- Not all pupils have sufficient vocabulary and skills to express their ideas fluently in their writing. They do not apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling consistently to their written work.
- Feedback in lessons and in marking does not always help pupils to understand how they can improve their writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 parts of lessons. They were usually accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning were observed during lessons, break times, lunchtimes and assemblies.
- Pupils from all age groups spoke to inspectors informally and in a formal meeting, sharing their views of the school. Their work, across a range of subjects, was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local authority and the governing body, and with staff who have leadership and management responsibilities.
- Inspectors spoke to parents when they brought their children to school, and while they were waiting to speak to teachers during parents' evening. They also met with those who attended the Parent Forum. The responses of 74 parents to the online survey Parent View were considered.
- School documentation was examined. This included the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Sarah O'Donnell	Additional inspector
Elizabeth Tennant	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school, which is increasing in size. There are 60 children in the early years (Reception class), which is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. These children are accommodated in a single large open area, and attend full time.
- The school meets current floor standards set by the government. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium is below that found in schools nationally. Pupil premium funding is money provided by the government to give extra support to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly similar to the national average.
- One third of the pupils come from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds; few are at an early stage of learning English.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress, especially in writing, by ensuring that all staff:
 - in Reception and Key Stage 1 use their knowledge of what the most able pupils know and can do more effectively to enable them to achieve highly
 - provide engaging activities that motivate pupils to want to write, and help them to acquire a good range of vocabulary so that they can express their ideas creatively and fluently
 - insist that pupils apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling consistently in their work across a range of subjects
 - provide feedback in lessons and marking that gives clear guidance on how to improve their written work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors share, and consistently communicate, their high expectations and ambition for pupils to achieve as well as possible. Since the previous inspection they have worked resolutely to raise achievement and the quality of teaching.
- There is now a strong staff team that recognises that pupils' futures benefit when they achieve to the highest level of which they are capable. Pupils in Year 6 are prepared very well for the next stage in their education. Achievement is rising in all year groups and subjects, including in the early years, but not as quickly in writing as in reading and mathematics.
- Information from frequent checks on pupils' progress is used well to identify those who are at risk of falling behind. Additional funds are targeted effectively to provide disadvantaged pupils with the support they need to enable them to overcome difficulties and to help them make faster progress.
- Through their rigorous checks on the quality of teaching, senior leaders have identified key strengths and areas for improvement. The school has worked in close partnership with other schools in the locality to share teachers' exceptional skills across a range of subjects and year groups to enhance provision. Training courses designed to meet the needs of individual staff, and the school, have been successful in raising teachers' knowledge and skills so that pupils make good progress.
- Subject leaders have developed their skills well and make important contributions by helping their colleagues to improve their practice and raise attainment.
- The school's own evaluation of its work is thorough because it takes into account the views of all who are involved in the school, and the analysis of information about pupils' achievements. It provides the basis for a well-focused action plan that illustrates the school's determination to raise achievement further and become outstanding.
- An imaginative new curriculum has recently been introduced. It is intended to provide pupils with rich practical experiences, to help them to develop a good vocabulary and motivate them to want to write. Pupils are enthusiastic about it because it is relevant to their age and interests. It enables them to apply their mathematical skills purposefully and confidently across a range of subjects. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of before-school, after-school and lunchtime clubs.
- The initiative to promote increased participation in sport, supported by the effective allocation of additional government funds for this purpose, is new. Pupils have access to a range of different sports, but the impact of this on their health and well-being has not yet been checked.
- The school has a strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Staff foster good relationships in school and in the community. Discrimination of any kind is tackled robustly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly. Pupils are taught to be tolerant, resilient and resourceful, and to collaborate well with their classmates. They know about different faiths and are developing good knowledge and understanding of democratic processes. This is preparing them well for life in modern Britain.
- The arrangements to ensure pupils are kept safe are effective and meet statutory requirements. Senior leaders and governors carry out an annual check to make sure that procedures are implemented correctly and that vulnerable pupils are cared for well.
- The partnership with parents is strong. Parents spoken to and those responding to the Parent View survey have full confidence in the senior leaders. They make a good contribution to the school's development through attending workshops, and expressing their views through the Parent Forum. They regularly listen to their children reading at home.
- The local authority has provided good support for this school, contributing to the rising trend in achievement, especially in the early years and Year 6.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are skilled and extremely knowledgeable about the school. They know about its performance compared to that of other primary schools nationally, the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' past and current progress. They use this information to challenge and support senior leaders to bring about rapid improvement. Finances are monitored carefully. Governors have allocated funds to provide additional teaching resources to sustain high-quality teaching while staff are absent, or to support small groups of pupils who need extra help.
 - Governors have robust procedures for checking on the performance of all staff. They link pupils' progress to teachers' pay and reward good teaching. They support senior leaders fully when they are

making difficult decisions to tackle underperformance, even if this leads to staff turnover.

- In addition to their meetings with senior leaders, governors visit regularly and hold meetings with pupils and parents. Through their discussions they check that developments set out in the school improvement plan are having the desired impact on pupils' achievements. They also ensure that the school's ethos is implemented fully through pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Parents, carers, pupils, staff and governors all compliment the school on the pupils' good behaviour. Pupils mostly show respect to each other, to staff and to visitors. They are aware of the importance of good behaviour and understand the penalties when they do not behave as well as they should. There are marked improvements for individuals who have behavioural needs.
- Pupils take pride in looking smart and take greater care in presenting their work well than at the time of the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils set an excellent example to younger pupils. All have important responsibilities and can be depended on to carry them out reliably.
- Most pupils are eager to learn, but a small minority do not listen carefully when their teacher is talking to them. Pupils are more enthusiastic about their learning in reading and mathematics than writing. They say that they like the way teachers make mathematics fun and they gain pleasure from reading. Writing is more challenging for them because they are not always motivated by what they are asked to write about in literacy lessons and find it harder to express their ideas fluently.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They are aware of different kinds of bullying and the impact this can have on them and their friends. Parents and pupils know who to speak to if they are worried, and are confident that their concerns will be dealt with quickly and robustly.
- The school's emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means there are few incidents of name calling or use of discriminatory language. Very few pupils have been excluded for poor behaviour.
- Procedures to ensure that staff are well trained in how to keep pupils safe, and to check that visitors are suitable, are thorough.
- Senior leaders and the family support worker work in partnership with a range of professionals and parents to maintain pupils' safety. They make rigorous checks on pupils' attendance, which has risen and is above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' work, records of their current progress and national test results indicate that teaching is good.
- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils know and can do. They use data about their progress to help pupils from different groups achieve well. Teachers in Year 6 are exceptionally knowledgeable and skilled in enabling pupils to make rapid progress, and in challenging the most able to achieve the highest possible standards, especially in reading and mathematics. This is not always the case in the younger classes, where the provision of demanding work for these pupils varies.
- Good training and the introduction of new methods to help pupils acquire a wide range of knowledge and skills allow teachers to be confident in teaching mathematics well. They encourage pupils to draw on their rapid recall of number facts and a wide range of methods to solve problems.
- Reading is taught well and pupils gain a lot of pleasure from reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. They have a good grasp of the sounds letters make, which gives them confidence in reading new words. Teachers often provide activities across the curriculum which require pupils to draw on their good reading skills.
- When writing, teachers ensure that pupils gain a clear understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. That said, they do not all insist that pupils apply these skills consistently in their writing across the curriculum. The tasks teachers ask pupils to undertake when writing are sometimes dull. They do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a rich vocabulary so that they can express their own

ideas creatively and fluently.

- Well-trained, knowledgeable teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They provide sharply focused support which speeds up the progress of pupils at risk of falling behind, those who speak English as an additional language, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Disadvantaged pupils are also supported well.
- Feedback in lessons and marking, about how pupils can improve their work is inconsistent. All pupils have targets to achieve, but they are not fully aware of what they need to do to achieve them. In writing, not all teachers give the guidance pupils need about how they can improve, when talking to them in class or when marking their work. The opposite is true in mathematics where good marking gives pupils precise information about where they have gone wrong and how to correct their mistakes.
- Parents are pleased with the way the school responded to their concerns about homework. Opportunities for pupils to read regularly at home, to learn spelling patterns, and to practise their mathematics skills are contributing to their enhanced rates of progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The determined action taken by senior and subject leaders since the previous inspection is ensuring that pupils are making good progress, especially in reading and mathematics. From their varied starting points many more pupils in Year 6 than before are exceeding the levels expected for their age. The school's own data for 2015 show that this is the picture in each year group. National test results for pupils in Year 6 were high in 2014.
- The most able pupils in Year 6 were challenged to reach exceptionally high levels of attainment. Over three quarters of the pupils exceeded the national expectation in mathematics, while one fifth reached levels of attainment that are usually achieved in secondary school. This was not the case in Year 2, where the proportion of pupils exceeding the national expectation was below average, especially in writing.
- Senior leaders have analysed the reasons for this. They have provided additional training and support for teaching staff, and recently introduced a new curriculum and programmes to develop pupils' ability to communicate more effectively in speaking and in writing. Pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. However, not all of the most able pupils in this phase of the school receive work that enables them to develop their knowledge and skills in depth.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In national tests in 2014 disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 outperformed other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, but not in writing. They were two terms ahead in mathematics, one and a half terms ahead in reading, but one and a half terms behind in writing. The gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in school was wide in mathematics, where they were six terms behind. It was narrower in reading, where they were one term behind, and two terms in writing. Current data indicate the in-school gap is closing, except for the most able in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good, and sometimes rapid, progress. In 2014 their achievement was higher than that of pupils of their age nationally. Staff identify and match work to their needs meticulously. This is also true for pupils at risk of falling behind, who are filling the gaps in their learning quickly.
- By the time they leave the school there is little difference in the attainment of pupils who speak English as an additional language, those who come from different minority ethnic groups, and boys and girls, all of whom achieve well.

The early years provision is good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and understanding that are lower than levels typical for their age. They make good progress, especially in their physical, personal, social and emotional development.
- In 2014 when children entered Year 1, their attainment was higher than in previous years, but remained below the national average. Children did not attain as highly in reading, writing and mathematics as in the other areas of learning. Few children, including the most able, exceeded the levels of attainment expected for their age. This is because staff do not always ensure that children complete the tasks designed to offer additional challenge when they are working on their own.
- Senior leaders have taken determined action to improve the situation. Data for this year indicate that more children than previously are on course to reach and exceed the levels expected of them.
- Higher expectations and training in new methods to teach mathematics are already proving beneficial. Children can count forwards and backwards from 0 to 20, and calculate the addition of small numbers

accurately.

- Children acquire good knowledge of the sounds letters make, and use this to make a good start with their reading. With the assistance of adults, the most able children are able to write simple sentences.
- While children talk happily to adults and their friends, they do not have a broad range of vocabulary. This limits opportunities for them to express their ideas imaginatively and creatively. Staff are undergoing training to introduce more effective ways of extending children's communication and language skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, and the same is true for those who speak English as an additional language. Staff design activities that meet their precise needs. They provide pictures, signs and good models of spoken English to help those new to speaking English settle quickly into school.
- Staff work extremely well together. Well-planned activities that are relevant to children's ages and interest capture their curiosity. Children from all backgrounds play harmoniously, behave very well and show good attitudes to learning.
- Good leadership and management of the early years have sustained the good provision found at the time of the previous inspection. The increase in the number of children sharing a large open space has been managed well. The classroom and resources are colourful and are organised to provide many exciting opportunities through which children can learn.
- The strong partnership with parents is helping children to make good progress in their literacy skills. Parents attend workshops so that they understand how children learn the sounds letters make. This enables them to support their children at home in reading and writing.
- Parents also provide useful information about their children's interests. Staff use this to devise an engaging curriculum that supports many opportunities for children to play and explore, to be creative and to try out their own ideas.

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	101645
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	453741

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hood
Headteacher	Geraldine Shackleton
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 February 2013
Telephone number	020 8460 4266
Fax number	020 8460 4266
Email address	admin@st-georgesbickley.bromley.sch.uk

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