

St George's Church of England Foundation School

Westwood Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 2LH

Inspection dates 28–29 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and leaders have a clear vision for the school, which is encompassed by the motto, 'Nothing but our best will do'. This ethos is communicated well to staff, students and parents.
- The headteacher, leaders, staff and governors share an unswerving commitment to ensure that every student achieves their goals, whatever their circumstances.
- After a dip in achievement in English in 2014, the school has taken robust and effective measures to accelerate the progress of students across the school. Students are now achieving well and making rapid progress.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Great care is taken to ensure that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Very few students are excluded. Students are considerate, respectful and take pride in their appearance. Their positive attitudes and improving attendance contribute to their good achievement.
- The school's work to keep students safe is outstanding. Students are happy and feel very safe in school. Those facing significant personal challenges are supported well.
- The sixth form is good and leadership is strong. Students are making good progress, particularly in vocational subjects.
- Governors offer appropriate challenge and support for senior leaders. They monitor regularly the impact of actions taken by the school to improve teaching and raise achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The achievement of students is not yet outstanding in English, mathematics and a range of GCSE subjects.
- The work set by teachers is not always well enough matched to students' abilities.
- The most able pupils do not always make as much progress as they could because they are not always sufficiently challenged.
- When activities are not interesting, a small minority of students lose focus and do not work with the same determination shown by the majority.
- Teachers' marking and feedback do not always show students how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 41 lessons or parts of lessons. Eight were observed jointly with a school leader.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, three governors, a representative from the local authority and members of the school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's information on students' progress, monitoring records and the school's self-evaluation summary. Inspectors also examined safeguarding policies, records of checks on the suitability of staff and other adults to carry out their roles in the school, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Students' work was scrutinised in lessons. A separate scrutiny of students' work was also carried out across a range of subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors observed students' behaviour in lessons, while students were moving around the school site and at social times, such as lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of the 93 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- In addition, inspectors took account of the 105 responses to a questionnaire for members of staff.

Inspection team

Theresa Phillips HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Webster

Additional Inspector

Maggie Brady

Additional Inspector

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Full report

Information about this school

- St George's Church of England Foundation School is larger than the average-size school.
- Most students are of White British heritage. There are a few students from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority. Some students are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The school uses Northwood Centre, Westwood Centre, East Kent College and Hospital School to provide courses for a very small number of students.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standard which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education and supports a number of secondary schools locally.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise the achievement of all students, particularly the most able, through improving the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently plan lessons that are well matched to students' abilities and aptitudes, especially the most able
 - planning lessons which engage all pupils and enable them to take greater responsibility for their learning
 - ensuring that all teachers' marking and feedback show students what they need to do to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The inspirational headteacher and senior leaders have a compelling vision for an inclusive school with high expectations for every student. Staff share this vision and, as a result, a caring ethos of support and learning permeates the school. Within this culture, students behave well and are keen and able to succeed.
- Senior leaders ensure that the school is exceptionally well organised. This provides a secure and supportive environment where staff and students can thrive. Staff morale is high, as seen in the very positive responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Leaders at all levels analyse thoroughly information about students' attainment and progress. Following the disappointing GCSE results in 2014, arrangements for checking how well students are progressing are more robust. Middle leaders and subject specialists check carefully the grades awarded by teachers to ensure they are accurate. Six-weekly reviews of students' work verify the evidence for progress. This more reliable data show that students are on course to achieve higher results this year and that current achievement in English is now good. Leaders recognise that attainment in other subjects is not yet as strong and have plans to tackle this.
- Middle leaders have been successfully helped to develop their leadership skills. They support, challenge and learn from each other. This spirit of collaboration has enabled staff throughout the school to share good practice and develop their skills. Staff training effectively tackles whole-school priorities and individuals' development needs. These actions contribute well to the improving quality of teaching and rising standards.
- The school's procedures for managing staff performance are rigorous and contribute well to improvements in teaching. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of students in their classes and the qualifications they achieve.
- The school's leaders have devised a curriculum which includes a variety of academic subjects and a good range of work-related courses. This enables most students to achieve well across a range of subjects and prepares them effectively for further study and future employment.
- Students are able to make informed choices about their next steps when they leave school at the end of Year 11 or Year 13 because of the school's well-planned programme of careers education, advice and guidance. Students spoke positively about the helpful advice given by independent careers advisors during assemblies and interviews. As a result of close collaboration between careers advisors and the school's pastoral team, every Year 11 student who left the school in 2014 went on to a school or college course, an apprenticeship or to employment.
- The school is an exceptionally harmonious community. There is a strong commitment by leaders at all levels to promote equality of opportunity and ensure there is no discrimination. As a result, pupils display high levels of respect and support for each other during lessons and around the school. Sixth form students provide help and support for younger ones, for example by listening to them read, and this support is well received.
- Students' understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, tolerance and respect are very strong because these values are reinforced through the curriculum and throughout every aspect of school life. At the end of every school day the whole community participates sensitively in a moment of reflection and prayer. There is an extensive extra-curricular and enrichment programme which includes strong links with a school in Uganda. All of these activities help to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- The pupil premium is put to good use and managed efficiently so the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and others is narrowing. Year 7 catch-up funding is used well so that students who fall behind with their reading in primary schools are helped to rapidly improve.
- Senior leaders give a consistent and very high priority to safeguarding and child protection. They are justly proud of their record of caring for students, some of whom have complex and profound difficulties in their private lives. Systems to ensure students' safety are excellent.
- School leaders frequently check on the attendance, behaviour and progress of students who attend alternative courses at other establishments in order to make sure they achieve well.
- The local authority provides some support for the school but does not provide enough challenge. A more rigorous external check of the school's self-evaluation would further help the governors hold school leaders to account.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors fully share the headteacher's vision for St George's and they care deeply about their school and each student that belongs to it. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses because of the strong and open relationship that exists between them and the senior leaders.
- Governors are involved in setting the school's strategic direction; they play a part in drawing up the school development plan and they check its implementation through frequent visits to the school. They are suitably aware of performance data and the quality of teaching in the school and challenge school leaders about underperformance. However, due to a lack of robust external evaluation, governors do not always hold senior leaders to account as rigorously as they might.
- Governors have ensured that the school meets all statutory responsibilities. They check carefully the spending of the pupil premium and know about the impact of the funding on outcomes for students. Governors ensure that pay increases for teachers are only awarded when the achievement of students is good. The financial affairs of the school are routinely monitored by governors and verified by external auditors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Their conduct around the school and in the vast majority of lessons is good. Students move around the school purposefully and are punctual to lessons. Students show an excellent level of care for their school environment. The building and grounds are virtually litter free. A large majority take pride in their work.
- Students are polite, courteous and friendly to each other, teachers and visitors. Teachers treat each student with respect, so that strong learning relationships are common. Inspectors saw no low-level disruption. A few students become distracted in the minority of lessons where teaching failed to keep their interest.
- The school uses rewards effectively to promote its motto 'Nothing but the best will do'. Using rewards as an incentive has contributed to a reduction in incidents of poor behaviour and improved attendance. No students were permanently excluded last year. The number of students receiving fixed-term exclusions is below the national average.
- The behaviour and attendance of students attending alternative placements are closely monitored and are good. When concerns arise, school staff respond rapidly to effectively address these.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students say they feel extremely safe and the vast majority of parents responding to the online survey agreed.
- Students stated that bullying is rare and is dealt with effectively by the school. They are well aware of different types of risk, including when using the internet and social media. Students are confident that the school will help them if they have worries about any aspect of their schooling or their personal lives. They say that there is always an adult to speak to and that they are confident that an effective response will be made.
- Safeguarding is given the highest priority. Procedures are rigorous and go beyond statutory requirements. The school works very effectively with a wide range of outside agencies to ensure that students receive the care and support they require. Staff in the school show a relentless determination to help every student overcome difficulties they face and this is building the self-confidence of vulnerable students.
- Attendance by all groups of students is above the national average and improving.

The quality of teaching is good

- Evidence from the work in students' books, school progress tracking data and from observing students' learning shows that teaching is good across the school.
- Clear routines and strong relationships between teachers and students build high levels of trust and confidence so that students are absorbed in their learning. Students in all year groups work very well together to solve problems and are happy to challenge each other's thinking and offer constructive advice.
- Teachers have high expectations and expect students to do their best. Teachers set tasks which are designed to engage and motivate students. However, they do not always set work at the appropriate level for all groups of students so that some students get left behind as the lesson advances. Sometimes, the most able students have to complete work at lower levels before moving on to more challenging tasks so

do not make as much progress as they are capable of.

- Where teaching leads to good or better achievement, skilful questioning encourages students to develop deep understanding. Where progress is less secure, teachers do not check carefully how well students have understood before moving on.
- Teachers' feedback to students is generally good. Students are given time during lessons to read teachers' comments on their marked work and many carry out corrections. In some cases, the feedback from teachers is not precise and students are not always sure what they have to do to improve.
- Staff are keen to improve their practice and describe a vibrant learning community. Well-targeted training has improved the quality of teaching.
- All subjects are supporting improvements in literacy through a strong focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar. The school's work to develop students' reading is impressive. Students are expected to read regularly in tutor time, in all subjects and in frequent 'drop everything and read' time. Progress is also supported through an effective reading scheme which students like and gives them access to books appropriate to their age.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving, and is beginning to be developed through other subjects.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to students' progress. Through their reassurance and effective questioning, students develop the confidence to work out problems for themselves. Teaching assistants support students struggling to read effectively. Students with special educational needs and those with low prior attainment are making good progress.
- Students report that homework is set regularly and that they are encouraged to push themselves to achieve their potential.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school in Year 7 with standards that are well below the national average.
- Year 11 students in 2014 arrived with low prior attainment. According to published results, standards were still well below the national average at the end of Year 11. These results were based on students' first entry to GCSE examinations, rather than those achieved when, in some subjects, they took examinations again. These showed improvement and students' progress in mathematics from their starting points were in line with national levels. However, the picture was mixed across subjects and included underachievement in English.
- Leaders have worked hard to address students' previous underachievement and can now show an upward trend of improvement, accelerating rapidly in the current year. This demonstrates that students are now making good progress. Leaders judge that the current Year 11 students are on track to achieve much better results in 2015. Inspectors saw robust evidence of more rigorous assessments, improvements in the quality of teaching and a change of examination specification in English.
- The school has a sound rationale for entering students early for GCSE based on a desire to ensure the best possible outcomes and secure future progression. The school recognises that the practice needs to be reviewed constantly to make sure it best meets the needs of individual students, does not limit the potential of the most able students and allows the school's achievements to be fully recognised.
- In 2013, achievement in English was above national levels and school leaders have taken effective steps towards restoring this position. The majority of students are now making good progress in English.
- The school's data show most students are making good progress in mathematics. However, the most able students are not making as good progress, but are now being provided with greater support and challenge.
- The most able students are making better progress in many subjects. They are able to study three separate sciences and their achievement in these subjects is improving.
- Students make excellent progress in vocational subjects.
- In 2014, taking first-entry data into account, disadvantaged students achieved around half a grade less in English and mathematics than other students in the school and one and a half grades below other students nationally. However, disadvantaged students' progress is improving quickly and these gaps are narrowing in all areas. This is a result of a greater focus on the progress of these students during lessons, more accurate assessment and well-targeted support.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress, in line with other students.
- The Year 7 catch-up fund is used very well to enable students entering the school with low literacy skills to make rapid progress. The recent deployment of a primary trained teacher is helping Year 7 students with

low numeracy skills to make better progress.

- The students who attend alternative courses make good progress.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students enter the sixth form with lower than average prior attainment. They make excellent progress in vocational subjects and progress in academic subjects is improving.
- The leadership of the sixth form is very effective. The head of sixth form and her colleagues care deeply for their students both academically and pastorally. Staff advise students carefully about the best combination of subjects to study and track their progress rigorously. When any student falls behind with their work, leaders take rapid and effective action to tackle the problem.
- The curriculum was broadened a couple of years ago to offer more choices at A level. Following low achievement in some subjects, the range of subjects was adjusted and is now well suited to the abilities and talents of students. Many students study a mixture of academic and vocational courses which ensure they gain the qualifications they need.
- The quality of careers guidance and information is good. The vast majority of students complete their courses and go on to further study or into employment. Strong partnership work with local universities is helping to increase the number of students going on to higher education.
- The sixth form meets the requirements for age 16 to 18 study and equips students well for life after school. The students who enter the sixth form without at least a grade C at GCSE English or mathematics are given good support to help them do well in their retake examinations.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use to engage and skilfully question students to deepen their learning. Students show highly positive attitudes which contributes to their good achievement. They frequently collaborate well during lessons, which builds their confidence and develops their leadership skills.
- Sixth formers have a high profile around the school and provide excellent role models for younger students. Their behaviour is very good. Students greatly contribute to supporting the school's progress by working alongside younger students as reading mentors.
- Students feel safe in the sixth form. They feel stretched academically and well prepared for the future. They are well motivated and appreciate the support and guidance provided by staff to help them raise their ambitions and achieve well.

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	118919
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	461930

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1198
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Jordan
Headteacher	Kim Stoner
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 May 2011
Telephone number	01843 861696
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