

St George's Primary School

St George's Road, Hull HU3 6ED

Inspection dates

1–2 December

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards in writing have remained low since the last inspection. Poor presentation and handwriting, together with errors in pupils' grammar punctuation and spelling, particularly in Key Stage 2, hamper their progress.
- The teaching of mathematics does not enable pupils to develop their abilities in solving problems or mathematical reasoning well enough.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 are not high enough. Expectations of pupils' progress are too modest.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs do not make the good and better progress they need to catch up with their peers.
- Leaders do not have a secure grasp of the progress and the effectiveness of provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers do not identify and address misconceptions in pupils' learning well enough.
- While behaviour in lessons is generally more positive, pupils' behaviour at playtimes can be too boisterous. Consequently, some pupils are concerned about bullying and not all pupils say they feel safe.
- Records about pupils' behaviour and safety are not as rigorous as they need to be. The school does not routinely log all forms of bullying and derogatory language, even though pupils say they hear derogatory language used in school.
- The checks made by leaders have focused too narrowly on whether teachers are complying with school procedures. Consequently, leaders and governors do not evaluate the impact on pupils' learning and progress robustly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision in the early years is effective in helping children make good progress and get a really good start to their schooling.
- As a result of the drive and determination of the early years' leader, standards in the early years have improved rapidly.
- The school uses funding for physical education and sports to provide good quality activities and learning for pupils.
- Support for pupils who are vulnerable is driven by a strong ethos of care and compassion.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching particularly in writing and mathematics to improve pupils' outcomes, by:
 - ensuring teachers address errors in pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling, including through their use of marking and feedback to pupils
 - developing teachers' subject expertise in mathematics to ensure pupils solve problems and reason mathematically
 - making sure that pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs, are challenged to make stronger progress
 - raising expectations of presentation and handwriting in pupils' work.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring the checks made by leaders and governors robustly evaluate the impact of the school's work
 - checking more closely on the progress of and provision for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - making sure that logs and records of pupils' behaviour and safety are accurate and carefully analysed to inform action to address concerns about behaviour and bullying
 - developing pupils' understanding of diversity and the impact of derogatory language.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs requires improvement. Leaders do not have a secure overview of the provision and progress of pupils who receive additional support. This is because the leader does not keep a close enough check on the progress of pupils or check on the quality of the support they receive.
- Leaders undertake a wide range of monitoring activities to check on the work of the school. However, too often these checks focus on whether teachers are complying with the agreed procedures in the school and do not evaluate the impact work is having on pupils' progress robustly enough.
- The headteacher, supported by the emotional well-being worker, is effective in the work to support the most vulnerable pupils. The work with other agencies ensures there are timely referrals for pupils in need, and concerns about pupils' well-being are followed up tenaciously.
- Parents who responded to the online survey (Parent View) and those who spoke to inspectors at the beginning of the school day and by telephone expressed mixed opinions about the effectiveness of the school's work to ensure good behaviour and keep pupils safe. Although arrangements for safeguarding are effective, observations and scrutiny of school records and logs show that these aspects of the school's work require further improvement. Records and logs of incidents do not cover all aspects of pupils' well-being and safety. Additionally, they are not always fully up to date or analysed to identify patterns or issues that should prompt action by leaders.
- While the curriculum covers an appropriate range of subjects, these are not always taught effectively. The headteacher is aware that there is much further to go in developing the teaching and assessment in a range of subjects. For example, the school is currently seeking to appoint a French speaker to assist with the teaching of modern foreign languages. The school has benefitted from working in partnerships which has brought in additional capacity to teaching, for example in physical education (PE) and music. In particular, the use of additional funding for school sports has been effectively spent on coaching which has enhanced school PE lessons and provided pupils with high quality physical activities. As a result, their skills in playing sports are improving. Pupils who completed the online survey have mixed views about whether there are enough school clubs for them to join.
- Aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development require improvement. It is clear that pupils from many diverse backgrounds get along with each other well. Observations of pupils' play, even for the youngest children, show they are happy to mix and play together without evening noticing differences in their backgrounds. Nevertheless, other aspects about pupils' understanding of differences beyond their immediate experience are less well developed. For example, the school has done little to expand pupils' understanding of all the protected groups required by legislation. This is evident in the casual and common use of derogatory language. Consequently, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for all they are likely to encounter in life in modern Britain.
- Reviews with the local authority and work with partner schools within the West Hull Co-operative Learning Trust have identified aspects of the school's work that need to improve. The school has worked with other schools to identify strong practice and provide training for teachers. However, the impact of this work is hampered because the checks leaders make do not focus on the difference this work is making to pupils' learning and progress.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Minutes of meetings show that governors are asking appropriate and challenging questions of leaders. However, the information and answers they receive from leaders are not as full, incisive and evaluative as they need to be and governors do not probe deeply enough to evaluate the full extent of the progress the school is making.
 - Appropriate systems for the performance management and pay progression of teachers are in place. However, targets and criteria to measure success are not as sharp as they might be to enable the robust challenge of performance that is needed.
 - Although governors are aware of how pupil premium funding is spent, they have not checked deeply enough into the performance of these pupils to uncover whether gaps in the achievement of those pupils currently in the school are narrowing or widening.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Most pupils engage appropriately with the clear and highly structured approach used by teachers. However, in some lessons teachers do not challenge pupils enough. For example, some pupils are asked to write texts that they have already shown they have a secure grasp of while others find it too difficult. This means that some pupils spend time doing routine or low-level work that does not challenge them to think deeply or to make better progress.
- Teachers' subject expertise in the teaching of mathematics requires improvement. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not give pupils effective opportunities to solve problems and think deeply about the mathematics they are doing. Teachers do not set work that allows pupils to use their skills fluently or make sure pupils' understanding is secure before they move on to different topics.
- Teachers follow the school's policy for marking. However, work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not spot or address basic errors in pupils' understanding. Consequently, these errors and misconceptions are left unchecked for too long and hinder pupils' better progress.
- There is some stronger teaching in the school, particularly for children in the early years and the oldest pupils. Here, teachers use different sorts of questions to help pupils to think more carefully about the work they are doing. However, this effective questioning is not consistent in all classes in the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use a range of different interventions and small-group work to support pupils' learning. The quality of these interventions is variable. While some are helpful in nurturing pupils' self-esteem and developing their understanding of English, others are less effective and do not challenge pupils to progress fast enough. The quality of interventions for pupils with special educational needs is not checked. Consequently, leaders do not have a secure understanding of the impact these interventions are having.
- Pupils engage well in sessions taught by PE coaches. This makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development as well as their physical abilities. Pupils show they can co-operate well and listen attentively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **requires improvement**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils have lessons and assemblies on aspects of safety and personal development but their understanding of staying safe is not strongly developed.
- They are aware of the inappropriateness of some language, for example racist language, but other forms like using the word 'gay' in a derogatory way are not understood. Many pupils said they heard this sort of language and gave inspectors examples. The school does not keep any log of this type of derogatory language and has not engaged in work to extend pupils' understanding of diversity to include these groups or to challenge and stamp out this type of language.
- A number of pupils and parents raised concerns about bullying. While most felt it is dealt with appropriately when it happens, not all pupils agreed and, as a result, not all pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The school works to ensure the safeguarding of pupils who are most vulnerable is a strength of the school. Leaders and staff care deeply about the well-being of these pupils. Evidence shows that leaders with responsibility are tenacious in accessing support for vulnerable pupils and make timely referrals to a range of agencies to help to safeguard them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Views expressed by parents and pupils were mixed. As one pupil put it, 'it's okay, but it ain't the best'. A number of parents expressed some concerns about behaviour and pupils also echoed these concerns. Inspectors' observations showed that although behaviour is more positive in lessons, it can get too boisterous, particularly at playtimes. Pupils said that occasionally play fighting turns into real fighting and inspectors' observations found that pupils' play was sometimes rather immature and not always well directed. The school is taking action to address some of these issues, for example, by increasing supervision at playtimes and providing an inside space for pupils who want to engage in quieter activities.

- Overall, attendance is broadly in line with the national picture. However, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is higher than that seen nationally. Currently, boys are attending well but other groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, attend less well. This further hampers their achievement.
- The number of pupils who are late to school is greater than might be expected. Although pupils sign a late book, this is not analysed to check for patterns or repeated lateness – which needs to be addressed.
- The number of exclusions rose last year and there have been some exclusions this term. While the reasons for these exclusions are clear, the process of managing pupils' behaviour on their return from exclusion is not as sharp as it needs to be to address any triggers of unacceptable behaviour and help pupils to avoid further exclusions.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' overall attainment dipped in 2014 but recovered in 2015. Nevertheless, pupils' overall attainment in writing has remained significantly below national levels. Work in pupils' books shows that weaknesses in their writing remain across the school and particularly in Key Stage 2. Although the school has made concerted efforts to improve the structure and composition of pupils' writing, one of the main barriers to better achievement is the basic errors pupils make in their grammar, punctuation and spelling. Together with aspects of weak presentation, these are not addressed well enough by teaching. Consequently, standards in writing remain stubbornly low.
- Work in pupils' books and observations of learning show that pupils' skills in solving mathematical problems and their ability to reason mathematically are not well developed. This is because work in problem solving is not carefully linked to other aspects of mathematics to enable pupils to secure a deep understanding of the concepts they need to know before they move on to other topics. In one lesson, pupils could only use limited strategies to solve a money problem. This was because they did not have a fluent grasp of the related skills required and so missed the patterns and combinations of different multiples that would have enabled them to solve the problem quickly and skilfully.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 is too low. Although the declining trend in pupils' attainment halted in 2015, pupils' achievement at the end of Year 2 remains well below expected levels. One of the reasons for this is that the school's expectations of the progress pupils should make in Years 1 and 2 are too modest. Consequently, not enough pupils are catching up from their starting points and too many are not well prepared for learning in the next key stage.
- From low starting points in Key Stage 2, most pupils who left Year 6 in 2015 made expected progress. Some made good progress and caught up to the levels expected for their age. However, the current picture of progress in Key Stage 2 is more mixed and some younger pupils are not progressing as rapidly as they need to. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils who, in some cohorts, are not progressing as well as their peers. Consequently, gaps in achievement are opening up.
- Pupils make stronger progress in reading than in writing or mathematics. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has steadily improved since the last inspection. This knowledge helps them in reading unfamiliar words; however, other skills, for example gathering the gist of the meaning of words from the text, are less well developed. Although standards in Year 2 are below expected levels, pupils' progress picks up in Key Stage 2. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' achievement in reading is broadly in line with the national picture.
- The school has adopted a system for assessing pupils' achievement in other subjects. However, observations of pupils in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work show that these assessments are not wholly accurate.
- The school does not have a secure grasp of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. While some pupils are supported in a nurturing environment and through interventions, too often they are not challenged to progress as well as they can because the work they are given is not always carefully matched to their individual needs.

Early years provision

is good

- There have been marked improvements in the early years. Children's outcomes have risen considerably since the last inspection. The majority of children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are lower than those typical for their age. In 2015, around two thirds of children's personal development was below typical levels and only around one fifth had levels of communication and language typical for their age. From these starting points, children make good progress and gaps in their achievement are closing as they catch up quickly. In 2015, the proportion of children who were ready for learning in Year 1 was in line with the national average.
- The provision in the early years is inviting and encourages pupils to explore and learn effectively both through their play and through activities directed by adults. In particular, the Reception class has been successful in encouraging pupils to write and use the sounds they learn from their work on phonics.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning journals through tasks and activities they can share at home to help develop their child's understanding of the world.
- From the outset, staff form positive relationships with children as they settle into well-established routines. Children show they are safe and behave well, quickly learning to show sustained interest in activities. These are carefully managed to ensure that children are given opportunities to have a go at things for themselves and develop their independence, for example, in collecting the things they need to explore their own ideas.
- These improvements have been driven by the early years' leader who has provided staff with the professional development and training they need to deliver high quality provision. Adults make regular checks to ensure the safety of children and that the setting is safe and accessible. The leader has a secure grasp of the progress of children across the setting because she gathers and analyses information about observations and assessments of children's learning. While most of these assessments are accurate, there are occasions when adults do not always take the opportunity to challenge and extend children's thinking as much as they could.

School details

Unique reference number	117815
Local authority	Hull
Inspection number	10003094

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Jones
Headteacher	Louise Oddy
Telephone number	01482 351013
Website	www.st-georges.hull.sch.uk
Email address	info@st-georges.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2012

Information about this school

- St George's is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is almost double the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Overall, the proportion of pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is slightly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- Children in the early years attend the Nursery on a part time basis and full time in the Reception Classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.
- The school is part of the West Hull Co-operative Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in the school. This included observations carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also made several short drop-in visits to classes and visited small-group teaching sessions.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and spoke with pupils informally at lunchtimes, breaktime and around the school. Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and considered 31 responses from the online pupils' survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work in pupils' books in a range of subjects and evidence in children's learning journals in the early years. Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked the school's information about progress in reading, writing, mathematics and the early years.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, other leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority and two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also considered 11 responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of parents at the beginning of the day to gather their views, alongside two telephone conversations and 37 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's information about pupils' performance, governing body minutes, reports from leaders and their evaluations of the quality of teaching over time, plans for improvement and logs and records of pupils' behaviour. Safeguarding procedures were also scrutinised.

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