

# St Georges VA Church Primary School

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

## Inspection dates

17–18 May 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good and as a result pupils are not yet achieving well, particularly in key stage 2.
- Despite recent improvements, the progress pupils currently make from their starting points is not yet good.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has been below standards found in the majority of other schools over recent years. The key stage 2 results for 2014 and 2015 show that many pupils did not make enough progress.
- The most able pupils are not routinely challenged in key stage 2. Their progress in reading and mathematics is not yet good.
- Leaders do not look closely enough at the impact of teaching on learning. This makes it harder to fine-tune the aspects of teaching that need to be improved.
- Leaders do not check that pupils are sufficiently well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have not monitored the impact of the work they do to make sure that pupils understand about tolerance or democracy.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are still falling behind. Leaders and managers review pupils' progress frequently but they are not fully effective in adapting provision to help pupils to catch up.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils learn their phonics quickly because the links between letters and sounds are well taught.
- The majority of pupils achieve well in key stage 1 and the early years (the Reception and Nursery classes).
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress because the support they receive is well planned and carried out.
- The governors are now challenging the school more effectively and keeping a closer watch on how well it is doing.
- The vast majority of pupils focus very well in lessons and are keen to learn. They are friendly to each other and stress that the school is a very happy, safe place.

## Full report

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

- Develop the way the new national curriculum is taught in key stage 2 so that the most able pupils are routinely given work that challenges them and deepens their thinking.
- Fine-tune the provision made for disadvantaged pupils who are falling behind by ensuring that the support they receive is fully reviewed and amended where necessary to increase rates of progress.
- When checking the quality of teaching, leaders need to look closely at what is working well or not in pupils' learning in order to identify which improvements will have the most effect.
- Ensure that pupils are fully prepared for living in modern Britain by:
  - auditing the curriculum to check whether enough attention is being given to matters such as British values, tolerance and democracy
  - evaluating the impact of these aspects of the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders did not initially take rapid enough action to improve the school following the previous inspection in March 2014. Consequently, results were low in 2014 and remained low in 2015. More recently, there has been a greater focus on raising achievement from leaders and staff, but teaching is not yet securely good.
- The current senior and middle leaders have demonstrated that they have the capacity to improve the school, for example through their work on changing the way the new national key stage 2 curriculum is taught. The focus on mathematics, which has drawn on support from the local authority, has been effective. Many pupils are making up lost ground, particularly in Year 6, although more remains to be done as achievement is not yet good.
- Staff have adapted their teaching to suit the new national curriculum so that pupils are provided with work that is appropriate for their age. However, two important areas remain to be improved within the curriculum: one is to make the work for the most able pupils more consistently challenging; the other is to ensure that the school prepares pupils effectively for life in modern Britain.
- The prioritisation of improvements to academic achievement has meant that the wider curriculum has not been the focus of attention. School policies indicate that pupils learn about British values such as tolerance and democracy. However, leaders do not check on the extent to which pupils really understand democracy or understand about how people might use language prejudiced against some groups. The curriculum does not ensure that pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their education and their future lives.
- Pupils show by their attitudes and behaviour that most aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development feature strongly in the school. Spiritual development is a particular strength. During an inspiring collective worship, pupils behaved with great maturity, suggesting words to be used in prayer and reflecting on what God may be like. A good range of extra-curricular clubs, including music, dance, sport and literature, support pupils in learning to work together and learning about the arts.
- A strong group of middle leaders is supporting improvements to teaching well. As a result, the leadership of numeracy and literacy is now more effective. The leadership of special educational needs is also a strength. The leader has a deep knowledge and wide experience. She ensures that plans are well focused and clear strategies are identified. She also ensures that pupils' progress is tracked and reviewed against their individual targets, taking rapid action to ensure that appropriate further help is provided, where needed.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance is now more effective. Governors understand the assessment information they are given by leaders, and records of their meetings show that they ask questions to establish how well the school is doing. Although governors are now holding leaders to account, they were initially too slow to bring about improvement following the previous inspection.
  - Governors ensure that both pupil premium and sports funding are spent appropriately for most pupils, although provision needs to be better for the disadvantaged pupils who are falling behind. Governors found the external review of pupil premium funding, recommended at the previous inspection, to be useful. There is now a detailed account of spending on the school's website, and they more closely monitor the impact of this funding.
  - The school meets statutory requirements, for example for checks on teachers and safer recruitment. Governors have received appropriate training and the committee structure enables governors to support school improvement. Governors have been closely involved in the school's move to join a multi-academy trust, due to start in July 2016. They have drawn on support from the trust's leaders to make strategic plans for the future of the school's leadership.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Risk assessments are rigorous and pupils are taught how to stay safe in a range of circumstances. The school engages well with parents, and takes the right steps where any liaison with social services is required.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The most able pupils are not being challenged sufficiently. Although there are occasions when pupils' work indicates that they are encouraged to explore ideas further, tackle complex problems or apply a range of skills to reach a conclusion, these opportunities are not routine. Often the pupils show they are not familiar with this level of thinking, and a lack of practice means they struggle to finish, even with good support.
- Leaders are using a newly implemented system to track pupils' attainment and progress to compare the progress of groups, and are combining it appropriately with study of pupils' work to keep a check on how well things are going. However, leaders are not yet fully effective in using this information to adapt teaching to more closely meet pupils' needs so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Improvements to teaching have been most effective where they have been focused on pupils' learning. In mathematics, for example, close attention has been given to ensuring that pupils understand key concepts rather than simply applying a method. Teachers and teaching assistants require pupils to think 'Why does this happen?' or 'Why does this work?' This has had a positive impact on pupils' understanding and helped them to make up ground.
- Leaders' analyses of improvements to teaching recognise the effectiveness of this work in mathematics. Records also show that teachers respond positively to the advice they are given so that their practice improves. Leaders do not always ensure, however, that their evaluation of teaching focuses on the impact of teaching upon learning sufficiently.
- Teachers are following the school's marking policy consistently. Pupils say that they find the feedback about how to improve very useful and their work shows they use advice well. Pupils' books also show that teachers give good attention to identifying where there are misconceptions and then helping pupils to catch up. Where a pupil has not understood the aim of the lesson, a further piece of work often appears, particularly in Year 6, showing specific support to help them understand. Early intervention is also a feature of the very good work the school does with pupils who have special educational needs or disability.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils who were asked, and almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that children feel safe. One parent wrote, 'There is a real focus on the children as individuals and on their well-being.' Staff who responded to their questionnaire were unanimous that pupils are safe in the school. Pupils understand how to stay safe around the site, in daily life and when they use computers. They wear hats in the sun, and eat healthy snacks and drink water at playtime.
- The school's very good work with pupils who have special educational needs or disability is recognised by almost all the parents who responded to the online questionnaire. The school goes to great lengths to identify and meet pupils' needs.
- Pupils value their friends and school life. For example, one said, 'As girls we feel like sisters', and another commented that 'Teachers are really helpful and nice. They help whenever they can.' Some of the pupils spoke glowingly about their favourite things at school, including learning new things, worship and the big classrooms, as well as their friends and play equipment. They were unanimous that they would recommend the school to other children.
- Pupils understand that to learn successfully they must listen to or read the advice teachers give them. They develop self-discipline as they move up through the school. They ask questions to help their learning and are keen to try and explain their thinking.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The pupils listen attentively when the teacher addresses them, and nearly always remain closely focused on their work in lessons. They listen to each other and respect each other's views. During collective worship, they were completely enthralled by the way real rocks were used to illustrate the theme 'God is a rock'.

- Pupils are very courteous and welcoming, holding doors for each other, staff and visitors. The school is a very orderly environment. At play, they run around but are careful and sensitive to each other.
- Attendance is above average, and no groups are disadvantaged by not attending school enough.
- Pupils interviewed say that bullying is not a problem in the school because it does not often occur. They know the different forms bullying can take, and are confident that their teachers sort it out when it does occur.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- The work of pupils currently in key stage 2 shows that their progress has improved, but it is not yet good. The 2014 key stage 2 results showed pupils' progress to be slow. Attainment and progress fell further in 2015, especially in mathematics. The school reached the government's floor standards in 2015 because pupils made much more rapid progress in writing.
- The achievement of the most able pupils requires improvement. The most able pupils are not yet all producing work at a sufficiently deep level in mathematics. The school's own assessment information indicates that not all the pupils identified as the most able at the end of Year 2 are making sufficient progress to achieve their potential in reading at the end of Year 6.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are not making the progress they should. Frequent pupils' progress meetings focus on those few who are not making enough progress, to highlight their need for particular attention to all the adults who work with them. However, this review is not fully effective. Strategies are not analysed in terms of whether specific changes should be made. Funds are spent in the right areas to support the majority of disadvantaged pupils. The school reviews strategies well for pupils who have special educational needs or disability. This good practice could be extended to disadvantaged pupils whose progress is slipping.
- The school's assessment information shows that pupils who reached the expected standard in key stage 1 are on track to reach standards expected for their age in Year 6, despite a more challenging curriculum. These assessments are borne out by work in pupils' books. Pupils are catching up in all year groups. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, a pupil who had been below the expected level at the end of key stage 1 gave an encouraging age-appropriate explanation of how to divide 43 by 6, using a process known as 'chunking', where pupils count up in sixes to see how close they can get to 43.
- Results for 2014 and 2015 show that pupils who have special educational needs or disability made better progress than other groups. In 2015, their writing results showed good achievement. Current school assessments show that the strengths in outcomes for these pupils are continuing.
- Key stage 1 pupils and those in the early years make good progress, particularly in phonics. Phonics is taught directly but also reinforced through other activities. Year 2 pupils are writing well in the different subject areas. They can use connectives to write longer sentences, and there are plenty of examples of different sorts of writing. Higher up the school, words and grammatical structures are being used well to provide atmosphere and bring writing to life. Occasionally, some writing lacks the necessary degree of formality for its audience or purpose.

## Early years provision

## is good

- Assessments and records of children's work through the year (learning diaries) show that children have made good progress in both the Nursery class and the Reception class. Published information for 2014 and 2015 shows that, by the end of Reception, the children reached standards that were higher than those reached nationally. Records of work of current children show that this good progress is being maintained.
- Adults make sure that there is a strong focus on phonics and writing. In Reception, guided writing sessions and the good phonics teaching help to ensure that, by the end of Reception, children are well prepared and ready to enter Year 1.

- In the Nursery class, adults take every opportunity to encourage children's growing communication skills. For example, during the inspection, the children enjoyed the activities around the theme of 'super heroes' that shoot 'gloop'. Adults drew out their thinking with effective questions, for example 'What does the gloop do to him?' The outdoor provision includes good opportunities for children to experiment with natural materials including wood and water.
- Children in Reception work well together, engage with activities and listen effectively. They demonstrate a good understanding of information technology, including tablet computers.
- Behaviour is good and routines are well established. Safeguarding is effective and there are no breaches of statutory requirements. A high level of care encourages the children to feel safe, settled and ready to learn. Adults are very alert to any children not joining in, and intervene where necessary.
- Both classes follow an 'open door' policy with parents. There are good induction procedures and home visits to gain as much information about the children as possible. Parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the provision. There is also effective liaison with the feeder pre-schools.
- Additional funding is used effectively to support particular help for disadvantaged children, and provide them with resources to encourage learning. Pupils with additional needs are given one-to-one attention as appropriate.
- Leaders have ensured that assessments made for children in the early years are accurate. They are aware of the need to check on teaching and support the teacher who is now in the Reception class, particularly with the use of the outdoor area. Staff do not always ensure that the outside area is used to its full potential.

## School details

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 134830         |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | North Somerset |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10012341       |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 238  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Lyndsay Markham  |
| <b>Acting Headteacher</b>                  | Rachel Clark   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01934 426901   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.stgeorgesvachurchprimary.co.uk">www.stgeorgesvachurchprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:stgeorges.pri@n-somerset.gov.uk">stgeorges.pri@n-somerset.gov.uk</a>       |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 11–12 March 2014   |

## Information about this school

- The school is of average size. It has one class for each year group.
- Most pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- The school has an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils, for whom it receives pupil premium funding. It also has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum standards expected for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is due to become an academy on 1 July 2016, joining a multi-academy trust.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made observations in lessons, studied pupils' current and past work, and looked at the school's assessment information. They looked at a wide range of school documentation.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils from each of Years 3 to 6, and also talked to pupils informally.
- They had discussions with senior and middle managers, and with senior staff from the multi-academy trust the school is due to join. The lead inspector spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors gathered the views of staff by questionnaire, and studied the responses of 44 parents or carers who responded to Parent View. An inspector also spoke to parents at the school gate.

## Inspection team

Deborah Zachary, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Rafferty

Ofsted Inspector



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